

THE  
AMERICAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

---

VOL. I.

MARCH, 1830.

NO. XII.

---

BURKE.

(Continued from page 757.)

IN proving the consistency of Burke's political life it would perhaps have been fully sufficient to have followed the course, which he himself has marked out in those writings, which were partially intended by him as a defence against the accusations cast upon him after the publication of his "Reflections." We might have justified our opinion of his character by quotations particularly from his "Letter to a noble Lord," his "Appeal from the new to the old whigs," and his "Observations on the conduct of the minority." Those who have studied these portions of his works will consider any farther vindication of his actions and motives as superfluous and needless. They do indeed form the only grand and lasting monument of the kind to the incorruptness of his integrity and the intense devotion of his patriotism. It is a monument that can never be defaced. And yet, comparatively few, till the community becomes far more intellectualized, will take the trouble to study its inscriptions, or even be prepared to understand them. It may also be observed that in conformity with the whole character of his mind and the nature of his writings, which are made up altogether of those eternal, indestructible and universal truths, which do not lie at the surface of things, nor come within the vision of the common intellect, but are reserved for great genius in all ages to discover and explain, he has, in the publications we have mentioned thrown the concentrated light of his wisdom only around those leading points, which his profound penetration at once seized upon as most important; he has left it to his readers to follow out in their own minds the train of thought and reasoning which he has opened, to gather up the minute particulars, and to make for themselves the obvious reflections, of which his own pages contained the invaluable germs. We have contented ourselves with filling up, as far as we were

able, the outlines that his comprehensive genius had drawn, and have presented to our readers the results of an investigation as minute and extensive as our limits would permit, of the tenor of his whole works and the history of his whole life. We suppose, (such is the constant habit of occupying ourselves with matters of present interest and passing importance, to the exclusion of those which are neither local nor temporary,) that our journal will be perused by many, who perhaps have never looked into a page of Burke's eloquence except his reflections on the French Revolution—by some that have never read a single line in any one of his productions—and by many, who have taken their views of his character and eloquence from the exhibitions of partial and scanty histories, lying Biographies, malignant critics, false friends and declared enemies.

Having thus imperfectly examined the injustice of the slanders cast upon his memory, we shall proceed to mention, in the short space we have left, some of the most striking traits of his political and private character. And in remarking on his public and private merits we shall not confine ourselves to any particular order of time or method of association; we shall take the liberty to exhibit them as they present themselves successively and spontaneously to view.

We cannot for a moment agree with those writers, (there are some) who lament that Burke should have devoted his mighty mind exclusively to civil and political pursuits. To excel super-eminently as a politician, using the word in its most extensive signification, requires a combination of rare qualities that is exceedingly seldom to be found in the same individual. By bending the whole force of his intellect to the cultivation of some single branch of science or literature, many a man may become proudly distinguished, whose mind would have been unequal to the attainment of any important degree of eminence in a sphere that involves such various and mighty duties, and demands such universal accomplishments as that of a truly patriotic and liberal statesman. Besides, there are men of most commanding intellect, who would shine as exalted patriots and statesmen; if the powerful passions were never to be tempted; but few, very few who combine with a strength, profundity and grasp of genius, able to cope with the vastness and perplexity of public affairs, a strength of integrity sufficiently purified and rigid to resist on all occasions the strong seductive temptations to corruption. Hence, the world can exhibit a thousand individuals, of truly wonderful skill in the pursuit of some particular art, literary or scientific, for one of widely beneficial and surpassing greatness in the business of political existence. It can even boast of many who have possessed great integrity, patriotism and ability in public stations, without being able to combine as Burke did, with these magnificent qualities, the power of searching out, illustrating, comparing and adorning the principles of government in their writings; so as to embalm their practical wisdom together with profound theoretical knowledge in a style of imperishable eloquence, that shall carry it fresh to future ages, and constitute at the same time the grandest of all literary models for the improvement of all coming posterity. The



same uncommon superiority of mind is requisite to enable the retired philosopher to reason closely and profoundly on civil and political matters. We have but one Montesquieu to reflect with such singular sagacity on the *causes* of the decline and fall of empires, for twenty Historians of the melancholy events. Instead therefore of narrowing his mind when he dedicated its power solely to the political happiness of his country, he was but devoting himself to that science which of all others, excepting only the science of Theology, demands the most comprehensive and gigantic genius. Far from considering it a subject of regret, we cannot but deem it an occasion of the highest exultation, when an intellect so mighty, applies, with such total consecration of its faculties, to so noble and magnificent a cause. Had Burke settled quietly into the chair of logical philosophy, a misfortune of which he stood at one time in imminent danger, he might have enlightened and enraptured the world by his glorious speculations on subjects which far inferior minds would have elucidated though he had never existed; but another generation, another age might have passed away, before mankind would have been (if ever) blessed with the vision of his active life, and the practical benefit of his vast political knowledge; before the world would have been taught by the instructions of his consummate wisdom, conveyed in a style of such rare literary beauty, and adorned by the graces of an imagination so gorgeous and unbounded, that thousands are seduced by its brilliance to an intimate acquaintance with the great principles of civil government and political economy, of which they would otherwise have remained all their life time in ignorance. We are led like unwilling school-boys to the pleasant acquisition of knowledge which we had looked upon as dry and tedious, by the pictures which serve to illustrate while they beguile and ornament our studies. In this point of view, the benefit which Burke has conferred particularly on the English nation cannot be too highly appreciated. He has provided that the study of the English constitution should be likewise the study of the splendor and compass of her language. He has reared the temple of knowledge and adorned it with such costly gems, that multitudes will come to gaze idly on its glories, who will go away with souls elevated by its dignity and deeply imbued with its living spirit.

The character which Goldsmith, so short a time before his own melancholy death, drew of his great friend, in its first six lines is very imperfect and incorrect; in the other eight it is true only in its exquisitely humorous and sarcastic sense. The couplet,

Who, born for the universe, narrowed his mind,  
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind,

contains a sentiment, to which no man, in the exercise of a grave judgment, can respond. The admirable observations on the utility and necessity of parties in a free state, contained in Burke's "*Thoughts on the causes of the discontents*," will forever prevent all who have perused them for entertaining for a single moment the mistaken idea that he gave up to party, what ought to have been devoted to the more

general interests of the English nation or of the world. Montesquieu has a passage on this subject so beautiful that we make no apology for inserting it. "Ce qu'on appelle union dans une corps politique est une chose très équivoque ; la vraie est une union d'harmonie qui fait que toutes les parties, quelque opposées qu'elles nous paroissent, concourent au bien général de la société, comme des dissonances dans la musique concourent à l'accord total. Il peut y avoir de l'union dans un état ou l'on ne croit voir que du trouble, c'est-à-dire une harmonie d'où résulte le bonheur, qui seul est la vraie paix. Il en est comme des parties de cet univers éternellement liées par l'action des unes et la réaction des autres." Burke leagued himself with a party because it was the only way in which as a politician he could be useful to his country or just to himself. There was however a marked and striking difference between his conduct in this respect and that of his political coadjutors. The mightiest in the host of opposition, he never would pledge himself to an unreserved and inconsiderate support of all the measures, which the majority of his party might think proper to pursue, nor would he join in opposition to the measures of the government, any farther than he might deem them injurious to the interests of the nation. Hence it not unfrequently happened that Burke's opinion was at variance with that of his own party, not less decidedly than with that of members on the ministerial benches. On some memorable occasions we might be found vindicating with the whole energy of his abilities the manly and vigorous proceedings of Government, while Fox and Sheridan unable to throw off the contracted spirit of party persevered in their opposition when it was really prejudicial to the cause of freedom and dangerous to the state. They strove for the aggrandizement of their party as the sole object of their exertions ; he desired it only as the means of advancing the good of the kingdom. Others joined the minority because it was the popular side, or sometimes because it was most favorable to their own personal interests. They looked upon its measures through the medium of self ; he through the telescope of patriotism.

This is undoubtedly one reason among many others, some of which we have already mentioned, why his political views were so infinitely more elevated and comprehensive than those of all his contemporary statesmen. His were gathered from general considerations, theirs too often from the contractedness of party prejudice. His profound constitutional wisdom, his knowledge of human nature, and his general deductions from history and personal experience placed him, as to the power of penetration, very far above all other men. The air about him was pure and clear, and he could see far away into the distance when the multitude were encircled with fogs and vapors. He was like one on the summit of a mountain ; they the dwellers in the vale below. His prospect was wide and glorious ; theirs comparatively mean and narrow. When the gray dawn broke upon his vision, they were still in the obscurity of midnight ; and when his person and the point where he stood were bathed in a flood of the morning light, it had but faintly glimmered on the valley beneath him.



It is quite vain to deny that Burke, in his keenness and extent of discernment, was immeasurably superior not only to all his contemporary statesmen, but to any statesman that has ever appeared in any country or in any age. The proofs of it are before us; they are recorded in characters of light on his own immortal pages—they are every day evolving in the changing condition of the world. It is still more vain to attempt to lessen our admiration of his extraordinary sagacity in those instances which cannot be disproved, by referring to some solitary circumstances in which his suggestions may have proved false or his predictions failed of accomplishment. In hazarding such prophetic assurances, it is not wonderful that he should sometimes fail; it is matter of astonishment that he should ever succeed. In all his speculations on the French Revolution he discovers a depth of penetration that is truly amazing. We cannot but admire the prophetic sagacity “which could detect in the constitution the future republic; in the republic the reign of anarchy; from anarchy he predicted military despotism, and from military despotism, last to be fulfilled and hardest to be believed, he prophesied the late but secure resurrection of the legitimate monarchy. Above all, when the cupidity of the French rules aspired no farther than the forcible possession of Avignon and Venaissin territory he foretold their purpose of extending the empire of France by means of her new political theories, and under pretence of propagating the principles of freedom, her project of assailing with her arms the states whose subjects had been already seduced by her doctrines.” *Sir Walter Scott's sketch of the French Revolution, (in the life of Napoleon.)*

To Lord Landerdale's opinion, that Burke was “a splendid madman,” “It is difficult,” answered Fox, “to say whether he is mad or inspired; whether the one or the other, every one must agree that he is a prophet.” Sometimes amidst an apparent absence of all data, on which to build even a fanciful speculation of such a nature, he throws a penetrating glance into futurity which reveals the scene that coming years are to unfold, as a flash of lightning in the gloom of midnight exhibits by a momentary glare the whole of the surrounding landscape, and leaves on the mind of the traveller amidst the thick darkness that succeeds it, no indistinct impression of the nature of the country and the situation of his path. At other times the whole tenor of his thoughts and reasonings is prophetic; he does not break out merely in occasional glimpses and dark forebodings of the future, but warns us distinctly of realities soon to be disclosed; he shines with a clear and steady light over the events and contingencies to come, and having displayed before us the basis of his views, astonishes by the sagacity which dictates his conclusions.

It may be remarked generally, that Burke's mind was the first to act on almost every beneficial measure, of any importance, which was passed during his public life. The measures which he suggested and advocated, but which were rejected at the time when he had first brought them forward, were invariably destined to be adopted, sometimes in a short period, sometimes in five, ten, or more years after he

had first asserted their necessity. Very early in his political career, he commenced a work on the injurious nature of the Popery laws, with a view to the emancipation of the Catholics of Ireland, a subject on which he exerted his talents whenever he could find or make opportunity. In 1780, his mind was occupied with a project for abolishing the horrors of the slave trade; and he drew up a code of laws for the regulation and alleviation of negro slavery, which alone would form a noble monument to the unequalled humanity and the vast powers of his mind. This code became afterwards, when its entire abolition was attempted, of great utility in the measures which were pursued for the attainment of that noble end. In 1771, he drew up and advocated a bill giving to juries, in trials for libel, the power of decision on the questions both of law and fact. It was rejected. In 1791, Fox, without the slightest acknowledgement or reference of any kind whatever to its original author and supporter, brought forward the very same bill, only altered a little in its garb, as gipsies (to use an illustration which Sheridan once applied in similar circumstances) dress stolen children in rags, to make them pass for their own, and the liberality of parliament having reached the point to which Burke had arrived twenty years before, the bill passed.

Burke's principles of commercial policy were enlarged, liberal and comprehensive, in a degree very remarkable amidst the contracted views of his age, indeed in any age. In his ideas on this subject he was at least a quarter of a century in advance of the whole English people. His conduct in 1778, in affairs relative to Ireland, exhibits his superiority in an interesting light. His exertions in support of the commercial propositions favorable to that part of the empire were the principal cause which prevented his re-election from Bristol. That monopolizing, overbearing temper which has too often disgraced the British government, never found a resting-place in his bosom. Had his spirit continued to preside in the councils of his nation, the United States would never have been compelled into a second just and necessary war; and the "men of England" would have been spared the bitter mortification of beholding their unconquered frigates successively hauling down the cross of St. George before the Republican flags of "striped bunting."

The whole character of Burke's politics was exceedingly grand and comprehensive. All his active measures bear the stamp of a great and noble mind; and in all the works he has left to posterity political science wears its very loftiest mien. This is owing partly to its intrinsic grandeur, and partly to the dignity which Burke's magnificent mind imparted to the most majestic subjects. In him there was nothing mean or insignificant; his objects and the measures by which he would attain them were reciprocally important and dignified. In this respect there was a wide difference between his schemes and those of Pitt. While this statesman was tasking his memory to find something within the confines of Great Britain's empire that had never been taxed, Burke was forming and perfecting a vast plan of national economy, which should save to the treasury an annual



income of almost one hundred thousand pounds sterling. While the minister was declaring a war for the navigation of the Scheldt, Burke professed to be contending for the safety of his native kingdom, for the regeneration of all Europe, and the restoration of her rightful monarch to the throne of France. Nothing can be more grand than the exhibition of his elevated views and truly august reasonings and reflections in his publications on a regicide peace. They are peculiarly sublime for being contrasted with the miserable, petty, contracted ideas of selfish policy, which ministers professed in the conduct of a war so necessary and glorious; for being mingled with indignant reproaches and powerful sarcasms, poured forth in the bitterness of disappointment at seeing the noble cause which occupied his soul almost totally destroyed by the paltry, inadequate, disproportioned and misdirected exertions of those to whom its active management was committed. "Nothing can be more notorious," says he in a letter dictated in 1797, but a very short time before his death, "than that I have the misfortune of thinking that no one capital measure relative to political arrangements, and still less that a new military plan for the defence of either kingdom in this arduous war, has been taken upon any other principle than such as must conduct us to inevitable ruin."

There was no political subject which he had not viewed in every possible light. There was no principle which he had not traced out into all its most remote and hidden consequences. The associating power of his mind was extreme. There was no subject that did not stand connected, in his sight, with a thousand others. There was no principle, however abstract, which he could not follow into a multitude of practical and moral results. He shows us, in his works, that the great principles of political and moral science are indissolubly connected together. When we have contemplated the display of some profound truth in one part of his writings, the same truth will occasionally spring up to our view in another shape, but equally beautiful and legitimate, on a subject apparently totally distinct from the former. Whatever subject was presented to his notice, his mind seemed to grasp, as if intuitively, the whole field of considerations that belonged to it. He would take in, at a single glance, all the variety of situations in which it could be viewed. Where other men ended their inquiries, Burke did but commence his investigations. Where the highest minds had pursued a topic apparently to its utmost limits, and followed it to a point beyond which their own vision could not extend, Burke would lift up the curtain and show them a vast field of speculation yet untried and unthought of, and carry forward his views still further in every direction, and trace out results, and connections, and associated principles, even more grand and important than any that had hitherto been revealed. Indeed, it was his general custom, in the House of Commons, to wait till the evening was very far advanced, and the question under discussion had been viewed in almost every imaginable shape, and when all the crudities of thought which could be expected had been broached, and every

member had exhausted his ideas upon the subject; then he would rise from his seat, and advance to its examination with the mien of a giant, and invest it with the splendor of his eloquence, and lead forward his hearers into trains of reflection and reasoning so new, sublime and unlimited, that they seemed to have been suddenly transported into another world. What but a grandeur and comprehensiveness of view absolutely unbounded, and a wealth of intellect perfectly inexhaustible, could have enabled him, on subjects of detail at first sight so tedious and uninteresting as his plan for an economical reform, and, after a long previous discussion, the Nabob of Arcot's debts, to have spoken for hours with an eloquence which he has hardly surpassed on questions of the deepest interest and sublimity, questions, the very terms of which call up in the mind a host of thrilling associations. But these are reflections which belong more exclusively perhaps to a philosophical and literary review of his works, than to the exposition of his public merit.

We have before spoken of Burke's patriotism, as distinguished from that of some of his contemporaries. It would require a volume fully to exhibit its purity and power. It was in his bosom a principle of most extraordinary and astonishing energy. It operated, under all circumstances and in all seasons, with a mighty force upon his mind. A feeling, something like that high glow of excitement which thrills in the breast of the warrior, when he meets his country's foe, face to face, in the deadly strife of battle, but which does away to a common impulse when the fearful agitation and tumult has subsided, maintained in his bosom its never-ceasing freshness and force. It accompanied him at all the periods and amidst all the various situations of life, in private and in public; and even in the whirl of parliamentary exertions, when the loftiest feelings too often degenerated into the mere ambition of display, or were lost in an envious contest of eloquence, or went off in the struggle for place and power—in the enjoyment of official authority, where the brightest love of one's country is seldom unmingled with selfishness, it kept its purity unsullied and its vigor undiminished.

His patriotism was enlarged and expanded. It compelled him to look from the present generation of Englishmen, back upon his forefathers, and forward to posterity. He looked at the influence of his measures, not only on the present, but also on the future age. Believing that a mild and legitimate monarchy was the best form of government in the world, and that the monarchy of England was the most perfect instance of that form in existence, he considered her freedom as a sacred trust, deposited by his ancestors, to be delivered down, unaltered and uninjured, to the latest generation. If reverence for the wisdom of past ages was a proof of aristocratical feeling, no man was ever more aristocratical than Burke. Mere antiquity, where the object of his regard was really worthy, conferred, in his view, an additional claim upon esteem. Antiquated maxims, if excellent in themselves, seemed to him the better for being old. "Inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their



fathers ; for we are but of yesterday, and know nothing," was one of his most favorite rules in all political investigations. The constitution itself was the more venerable and the dearer in his eyes for being "covered with the hoar of innumerable ages."

It was a generous patriotism. He wished to have all the institutions of his native land supported on a scale of munificent liberality. While he cherished a wise economy as one of the strongest pillars of state, and was ever inventing securities against the profusion of government and the prodigality of public officers, he would leave to royalty sufficient for the exercise of princely beneficence and princely splendor, and would apportion to the servants of the state a large and liberal reward. He was entirely free from that local selfishness of feeling which would covet to his own narrow island an undue portion of the bounties of Providence, or the benefits of human art ; that narrow spirit, which sought to monopolize the article of freedom, and deal it out in scanty and sordid allotments to other parts of the empire. It was his desire to treat the American colonies with that free and just liberality so becoming to a great nation. It was his earnest wish to administer the same strict justice to the distant, despised, neglected and suffering inhabitant of India, which was the boasted privilege of an English citizen.

It was a purely disinterested patriotism. If ever a statesman in history deserved the high praise of possessing this virtue, it belongs to Edmund Burke in a still higher degree. Thirty years passed away amidst the most vast, intense and assiduous exertions for the happiness and greatness of his country ; yet, in that long period, he never received the slightest direct pecuniary or honorary recompense, in the way of pension, sinecure, or reversion, for his countless services, till two years before his death set its seal upon an existence of such surpassing integrity and glory. Whenever he filled any one of the public offices, (it was but seldom,) it seemed as if he made it a point of conscience not to touch a single penny but the legal, limited, definite salary. In this way alone he has saved to the treasury of the kingdom sums which appear almost incredible. Nothing would have so startled the imaginations of his predecessors in office as the idea of any reform which would have the effect of diminishing their own private emoluments. They placed the accustomed perquisites in their own purses, and were wealthy individuals when they retired from public business into private life. Burke threw them all into the treasury, and devised schemes of reform which should forever keep them there.

It was an industrious patriotism. His exertions in the cause of his country's good were never for a moment remitted. His labors were incessant and intense in a manner almost incredible. It seems impossible that any human mind can have endured such continual and gigantic efforts, and compassed such a vast extent of the most difficult, intricate business as Burke sometimes endured and accomplished in one single session. We believe his natural as well as his acquired abilities to have been very far superior to those of Fox ; to

such as hold a different opinion, his history presents a most remarkable instance of the immeasurable superiority which a man of great industry will inevitably assume over those who are his equals in point of original, innate intellect, if they are not equally diligent in its exercise and cultivation. Of most of the measures of constitutional benefit and importance in his time he was the original framer and mover; to all he gave his unreserved and energetic support. During the recesses of parliament, while Fox was wasting his energies on the turf, Burke was mustering his forces and materials for the next arduous political campaign, or making some written record of his consummate genius, or suggesting and promoting some grand design of wisdom and benevolence—some vast scheme of public utility and glory. His works are a truly wonderful monument of human industry, but they only give us the partial exhibition of a few of his gigantic and unlimited labors. His speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts, for instance, exhibits a mighty mass of learning and information; but it is all so beautifully and symmetrically arranged, and interspersed with such superlatively eloquent reflections, and invested with a drapery of such splendid brilliance, that we are beguiled unconsciously through a long, profound investigation, and receive into our minds a vast store of knowledge, without ever remembering the Herculean labor, the intellectual toil of collecting and condensing it. When we consider his immense labors on every subject of importance that came beneath his notice, especially on the American Revolution, the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and the French Revolution; when we think of his vast correspondence, his various writings, and recorded and unrecorded speeches, and the profound nature of them, his annual Register, conducted for twenty years, his private business also as a practical agriculturist and in other ways, his industry seems almost entirely beyond credibility.

He wrote some of his political letters "amid a multiplicity of business, public and private, allowing him so little leisure that they were said to be dictated, "sometimes while eating a family dinner, sometimes while dressing, or even employed in familiar conversation." He wrote too, during the latter part of his life, under the pressure of sorrows that filled his soul, and would have stupified the faculties of almost any other man; and what is yet more the subject of admiration, he wrote amidst sickness and death. When intense grief occupies the mind, employment may be a relief; but when the body is racked with pain, or worn out and extenuated with consumption and decay, every effort of the mind becomes distressing, and adds a tenfold anguish to disease.

Burke was a *practical* statesman. It may seem needless to say a word on a point so perfectly evident. Yet we have sometimes heard it asserted that though admirable in the theory he was deficient in the practice of government. The whole tenor of his life is a glaring refutation of this false assertion. To show its extreme injustice, it would be sufficient to point out to our readers the vast amount of business, of no momentary importance, which was transacted during



the only period in which the management of the empire was ever entrusted to his hands. In the course of the short four months in which Burke and his party came into power in the year 1782, they accomplished more for the good of the nation, than almost any ministry, even of the longest continuance, ever did. They excluded contractors from the House of Commons—disqualified revenue officers from voting at elections—disfranchised corrupt voters—passed Burke's reform bill—re-established the long abandoned custom of making government liquidate its own expenses by its own revenues—rescinded the scandalous resolutions relative to Wilkes—frankly and cordially granted independence to the Irish parliament—and did more towards drying up the fountains of parliamentary corruptions and strengthening the power of the constitution, than any administration since that constitution had been settled on its then existing basis. They afforded at least one instance of the same course being pursued in power, which had been applauded in opposition.

The very idea, that a man may be excellent in the theory though deficient in the practice of any art, is a perfect absurdity, especially in political science. No theory can be good, which is not founded on fact and experiment. To construct a true one, and afterwards prove and explain it, requires therefore the same qualifications that are necessary in order to put it into operation—the same energy, prudence and calmness—the same power of judgment and comparison—the same calculation of results from apparent combinations—the same enlarged and comprehensive yet cautious and penetrating views. Generally, the man who can form an excellent theoretical system, is the best person in the world to carry it into execution. The truth of this idea might be illustrated by an appeal to the history of almost every science, but we will mention only one instance, the appositeness of which will be at once perceived and acknowledged,—that of Columbus.

The good mechanist in the construction of his machine takes into consideration the quantity of internal friction, as well as the external resistance to be overcome. Just so, taking human nature as it was, in all the political schemes, Burke made allowance not only for external circumstances, but still more for the passions, the prejudices and the opinions of men, which he thought most of all important to be watched. He did not dare, in this state of imperfection to hope for a perfect system of government. His own he considered as one, which had become adapted through a long series of ages to the wants and capacities and circumstances of the people, and which, by an inherent principle of improvement, was surely though gradually accommodating itself yet more intimately to the progressive improvement of the nation. He thought it a crime to tamper by his crude speculations with the constitution of his country, and least of all could he bear that men unacquainted with the world and totally ignorant of the human mind, should bring forward their insolent schemes about a perfect republic and the rights of man. If any thing could increase

his disgust, it was to see such men as Fox and Sheridan declaring their admiration of the revolutionary absurdities.

Any sudden change in a government constituted like his own he thought was a fearful and ominous event ; and he was content to wait for a gradual reform rather than plunge his country into ruin by a hasty and impatient innovation. Least of all did he believe a period of external trouble and inward agitation a fit time for the introduction of change, or even the correction of evils. At such a time, in the language of Lord Fitzwilliam, "he had rather see a bad minister go uncorrected, than a good constitution stabbed in its vitals." Some men thought it a seasonable opportunity for making those alterations for which they had long thirsted—of contracting in the monarch prerogatives which they thought too extensive, or of granting to the people privileges which they had not yet possessed. Burke considered it the worst of all seasons for such a cause. In times of savage licentiousness he would not concede to the humors of the people,

" That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,  
And still revolt when truth would set them free ;  
License they mean when they cry Liberty,  
For who loves that must first be wise and good."

At such times he was for drawing tighter the reins of discipline, and sending the riotous and the vicious mob to Newgate to vent their discontent to the stone walls of their prison. The principle of the old Romans in military affairs, never to grant peace but as conquerors, was his in the civil matters of the state. What he did not mean to give up should never be extorted from him by the terrors of democracy ; and the privileges which belonged to the people they should receive as their true inalienable rights.

In the public character of Burke we behold that beautiful union, so rarely witnessed, of active, inventive benevolence with the other majestic qualities of a patriotic statesman, which rendered him so truly and pre-eminently a humane politician. In a general survey of his merits, all the virtues that ever adorned a patriot rise up before the mind with so much successive excellence, that it is very difficult to say which of them predominates ; on the whole, we are inclined to consider his humanity as the peculiar and distinguishing characteristic of his public political course. It is a virtue that is so rarely exercised to any remarkable extent by the professed statesman, that it forcibly excites our admiration, when we see it running as it does through the whole of Burke's public existence, and forming a delightful feature in almost all his measures. It would be superfluous to enumerate the minor instances in which it was displayed, in some of which his benevolent purposes were successful though in others they failed of success. It gave a color to all his exertions in the cause of America ; and his indignant humanity excited by the wretched state of suffering and degradation, into which the unhappy people of India had been trampled by an avaricious despot, was the feeling that supported him in their defence, through ten long years of obloquy and



calumny and labor, with a persevering resolution that defied all weariness and disappointment and reproach.

Independence was another extraordinary trait in Burke's public character. Every prominent step in the whole course of his life glows with it. It was not an obstinate adherence to his own opinion, nor a rash rejection of the counsel of others. It was the independence of a man of unbounded intellectual power, who has thoroughly examined the question on which he is acting, and feels that he is acting right. It was the inflexible firmness of a man, who disregards all personal consequences, so he may but acquit himself of his duty to his country and to God. It engaged him in services, from which any other man would have shrunk with terror, and which he knew were sure to draw down upon his head the utmost venom of malignity and hatred. His reform bill was a pre-eminent service of this kind. The impeachment of Warren Hastings was a still more remarkable instance of it. That was indeed a most magnificent example of immense talent. Steadfast independence and moral courage, intense industry, unshaken constancy, active humanity. But the most sublime degree of moral courage was displayed at the opening of the terrible drama of the French Revolution. He was solitary in the grandeur of his decision. Wicked men hated him. Honest and good men were unsettled in opinion or opposed to his course. His firmest friends feared to accompany him—and some who had fought with him side by side through the severest political conflicts of his life—who had become endeared by a long and intimate communion—who had been, as it were, the pupils of his intellect, forsook the doctrines he had taught, deserted him with ingratitude, calumny and ridicule, and left him completely alone in his unshrinking opposition to the principles and practices of revolutionary France.

Perhaps there is no one thing which makes Burke's superiority over the whole tribe of contemporary statesmen appear more conspicuous, than his dignified independence in the customary solicitations from the hustings. He stood before the people as one who demanded their suffrage by the right of virtue and intellect. Like Coriolanus he could not compel himself to

" Put on the gown, stand naked and entreat them,  
For his wound's sake to give their suffrages,  
It was a part which he did blush in acting.  
To brag unto them, thus he did and thus ;  
Shows them the unaching scars which he should hide,  
As if he had received them for the hire  
Of their breath only."

To call names, to shake hands with the multitude, to exalt his own merits and degrade the reputation of his rivals, were artifices, to the performance of which his elevated mind could never descend. It was a new thing in Great Britain to hear the firm and honest sentiments of a member of parliament delivered in open, manly language to the ears of constituents.

When his electors in Bristol were discontented with his conduct in supporting enlightened and liberal principles of trade with Ireland, he sent them a letter, the commencement of which is a fine exhibition of the dignified and resolute constancy, of which we have been speaking. He tells them they had no need to remind him of their interest ; it was what he had ever pursued ; and after mature consideration, he believed he could not more certainly advance it, than by giving all the support in his power to those propositions. " The fault I find in this scheme is, that it falls extremely short of that liberality in the commercial system, which I trust will one day be adopted.—*Such virtue there is in liberality of sentiment, that you have grown richer even by the partnership of poverty.*" It was the steady determination, with which he adhered to such noble sentiments as these, that cost him, to the everlasting disgrace of that city, his membership from Bristol.

The extraordinary independence of his mind we cannot but consider as the principal reason why he was not made Prime Minister, on the accession of his party to power ; and it may account in a great measure for his exclusion from official authority during the whole of his life. Certainly, next to the employment of such a mind in the performance of parliamentary duties, the assistance of abilities like his, in the ministerial management of the government of Great Britain, would have been the best political blessing that could ever have visited the kingdom. In these matters, however, the members who are to act under a leader wish for one of great intellect—if it be not *too* overshadowing ;—at the same time they look for one who will conform in a great measure to their own decisions. Burke would conform to no decisions but those of his own judgment. Though ever ready to receive a wise suggestion from whatever quarter it came, yet such was his moral dignity and influence, and such the extreme supereminence of his intellectual powers, that all asked and received, but none presumed to offer him counsel. Such a man would have possessed as Prime Minister too much power for the purposes of the rest of his party. All the inferior members of administration would have been in reality, except in the peculiar business of each one's office, his very tools—the mere creatures of his will ; such being the vast extent of his knowledge that he needed not to ask them for information on any subject whatever, and such the strength of his genius that all great and important projects must have been originated and matured in the recesses of his own mind, long before any other person had thought of them. Besides, his integrity was so severe and incorruptible, that not a single individual among them could ever dare hope for any the slightest measure of mere personal or family aggrandizement ;—a most alarming consideration to the minds of men, who are patriots of interest and convenience.

With a mind so constituted, he could no more be popular with the multitude, than he could be acceptable to a corrupt parliament and a still more corrupt ministry. He would not truckle—he would never comply with the changing humors of the populace—" I am to look,



indeed," said he, "to your opinions ; but to such opinions as you and I *must have* five years hence." The current of his opinions was not to be turned aside, like Fox's, by the breeze of popular applause. His soul was far too noble to be dazzled by the glare of external splendor. Fox exhibited the weakness of his character during his interviews with Napoleon.—We should like to have seen Burke in his situation. We should like to have seen how the conqueror of the world's brute force would have shrunk and trembled in the presence of the moral conqueror of nations—in the presence of a sublime and intellectual and religious patriot—of one who admired no glory but that of honorable and virtuous deeds—of one whose clear purity of life and piety of soul must have made him appear, in the inmost thoughts of Napoleon, like the stern judge of the guilty despot.

Humility is a moral virtue that very seldom adorns a vast intellect. It appears almost incompatible with strong energy, firmness and decision ; because these properties are attended with so much pride and consciousness of superiority. To unite it with the grand and noble and powerful qualities is a task of difficulty, which human nature does not often accomplish. Burke exhibited that uncommon union in a most interesting and remarkable degree. Indeed his mind seemed as if it were a natural soil, where all the rarest perfections clustered in exuberance—in which the most delicate virtues took root by the side of the hardest, and sprung up and flourished in grace and vigor, although they could never elsewhere be brought to maturity together, or wore always the aspect of frail and sickly exotics. His unfeigned humility, his entire forgetfulness of self, diffused a delightful influence over his whole existence private and public. It threw a charm of native, unassuming, philosophic dignity over all his actions. We trace it continually in the perusal of his works. It is sometimes the source of his most exquisitely beautiful and affecting reflections. We observe its operation in his speeches and writings whenever he is called to speak of his own personal or political character. His expressions on such occasions are manifestly the sincere result of deep feeling ; infinitely different from that affected disparagement of one's own labors and virtues so common to the vainest and most ostentatious of men ; for whenever a just regard to his reputation rendered it necessary, his malignant accusers were sure to experience the full power of his most burning sarcasm and bitter contempt ; and he would assert the true merits of his life with all the indignant pride and majesty and fire of genius. In the business of parliament he never did any thing for the mere purpose of display, nor, except from unavoidable necessity, would he ever turn the attention of the audience to himself. His public demeanor was simple and dignified, with an unaffected cast, like that of Dr. Franklin ; and it could no more be disturbed by the most unbounded applause, than the mind of that venerable philosopher could have been shaken by the honor of a title conferred upon his name. Burke never allowed his private feelings to influence in any degree his public measures. The celebrated letter of the Prince Regent furnishes a singular proof of the ease with which he could

divest his mind of prejudice and passion, if any such existed in his bosom, and engage with philosophic calmness and dignity in the most trying and delicate business. His life is abundant in such instances.

His conduct towards his brother statesmen, in the performance of parliamentary duties, was liberal, generous and disinterested, in an unexampled degree. Envy never entered his bosom. It is a passion totally incompatible with the qualities of a very great mind. For the success of new political adventurers, and especially youthful ones, he felt an exceedingly ardent interest. Nothing could be more noble than the zeal he manifested in training Fox by his assiduous counsel, and afterwards upholding and assisting him by his mighty intellect. When Fox deserted his master and friend, Burke applied the same kindness to Windham.

In his own country, and during his life-time, the merits of Burke were never properly appreciated. Indeed they could not be. Abroad his character was viewed with a mixture of astonishment and admiration, the natural consequence of his conspicuous duties, and especially of his vast and varied efforts in opposition to the French Revolution. The French refugees regarded him with awe and veneration. They seemed to place all their hopes upon him, as if they believed him destined to become the political saviour of their country. They consulted his judgment, and relied on his opinions, with a simple confidence that was almost amusing. The "Cannibal Republic" looked upon him, in his retirement at Beaconsfield, with more anxiety and fear than they would have done on the whole armed force of England. M. Carles, the opponent of Mirabeau, spoke of him as a man possessed of "the sublimest talents, the greatest and rarest virtues, that the beneficence of providence ever concentrated in a single individual for the benefit of mankind. But Mr. Burke was too superior to the age in which he lived. His prophetic genius only astonished the nation which it ought to have governed."

By the strong contrast between himself and Fox and Sheridan, in relation to all those grand moral properties that form the true majesty of his character, Edmund Burke has left it to be read in sentences of light, as a warning to all future statesmen, that the most commanding talents, unless they be united with commanding virtues, unless they be sustained and directed by the sternest integrity, the most devoted patriotism, the most intense industry, the severest constancy, perseverance, fortitude, magnanimity, and a degree of moral courage that cannot be predicated of any but a religious being, will never enable an individual to inscribe his own character on the character of his age, to interweave the glory of his own life indestructibly with the history of his country's glory; that just so far as he comes short of possessing those admirable qualities in their loftiest perfection, in the same degree will his usefulness be diminished, his fame obscured, his memory darkened; that if he be deplorably destitute of them, and yet send down his name in the memory of all coming posterity, he will be so remembered that eternal oblivion were more to be desired—remembered only as we think of periods of wide plague, desolation



and calamity—remembered only to be shuddered at. It was not Burke's magnificent mind alone that placed him so far above all preceding, contemporary and succeeding statesmen; it was his magnificent moral qualities—his super-eminent abilities united with his super-eminent virtues.

Let us suppose, for a moment, that Dr. Johnson, the profound critic, the wise moralist, the mighty lexicographer, had been placed in the situation of Burke. He is said to have once regretted that he had not made politics his choice in life—at least, some of his friends were kind enough to regret it for him. Suppose, then, that, with abilities in every respect equal to those of his great friend, he had been placed in precisely the same circumstances. Either of his moral failings, lightly as they are looked upon in his private and literary character, would have totally prevented his ever attaining to the eminence or usefulness of Burke—his unconquerable indolence, or his habitual procrastination. He would, indeed, have exhibited the vast energies of his mind in debate and conversation; and his trains of thought and reasoning on such occasions would have been lucid and powerful beyond all conception. For as to actual thought, such a mind's thinking faculties could no more for a moment lie dormant, than the fiends of hell could sleep beneath their tortures. His soul was an intellectual volcano, which does not break forth into actual eruption perhaps once in a century, but in whose depths the white fires are glowing, and the molten lava is raging and rolling ceaselessly, and which is ever and anon throwing from its crater lurid volumes of vapor, mingled with intense flashes of lightning, that give no uncertain indications of the terrible commotion going on below. Perhaps in some of his paroxysms of political indignation, he might even have seized upon his pen, and poured forth at once a whole volume of such intellectual grandeur and power as would have placed his name at the head of all English literature. We may even imagine him to have arrived at the period of the French Revolution with a reputation not less splendid than Burke himself was enjoying at the commencement of that astonishing scene—although the supposition may not for a moment be indulged, that he would ever have undertaken, against the storm of prejudice and corruption, a labor so unfathomable as the impeachment of Warren Hastings, or a task so mighty as the economical reform—still, as it does come within the compass of human possibilities, we will imagine him, at the beginning of the French Revolution, arrayed in all the majesty of moral power and intellectual glory which his friend had so laboriously attained. The imaginary parallel can be pursued no further. At the opening of that awful drama, instead of laying out the whole strength of his intellect, with decisive promptitude, in those consummate reflections on its wickedness and madness and misery and absurdity, which should drive its misguided admirers to the conviction of its guilty and destructive principles, he would have contented himself with public anathemas of his indignation on the French people, or deferred his exertions till the season for their usefulness had passed, or, in all

probability, he would have put forth the arm of power with such ill-timed violence, as to precipitate the very calamity he was seeking to avert.

In the life of Burke, his public and private virtues harmonize and blend in a manner so beautiful, that it is impossible to draw a distinct line of division between them. When a statesman is deficient in private morality, it is very easy to discover when that deficiency begins to injure, as in all cases it most certainly does injure, his public utility. The collision of vice and virtue becomes instantly evident. But excellence, public and private, forms one unbroken and perfect circle; nor is it possible to know exactly where the one passes into the other. It is exceedingly delightful, amidst the dearth of such harmonies in English history, to meet one powerful and distinguished statesman, the dignity and purity of whose private existence corresponds so intimately with the splendor of his political course. We survey Burke amidst the severe and majestic duties of parliament, in the gaieties of the literary club, in the delicacy of domestic retirement, and it is, *si magna licet componere parvis*, like watching the progress of a summer's day, from its morning and meridian splendor, through the glories of sunset, and the soft tints of twilight, till we find ourselves surrounded by the coolness and freshness and fragrance of evening. The more pleasing and engaging parts of a public man's character do not open on our view till we follow him amid the scenes of his social retirement; as the starry spheres, which are the beauty of the universe, flash not upon the visual sense till the grandeur and glare of noon-day have passed into the shadows of night. "Le ciel," says Madame de Stael, "n'est il pas plus beau pendant la nuit? Des milliers d'étoiles la décorent. Il n'est de jour qu'un désert. Ainsi, les ombres éternelles réveillent d'innombrables pensées, que l'éclat de la prospérité faisait oublier."

An anecdote of Burke's childhood, as related by Mr. Prior, in itself very simple, is yet full of interest as an early development of that benevolent disposition, which was so extensively and beautifully exhibited through the whole of his intensely active life. "It is recorded," says his biographer, "that seeing a poor man pulling down his own hut near the village, and hearing that it was done by order of a great gentleman in a gold laced hat, the young philanthropist exclaimed, his bosom glowing with indignation, that were he a man, and possessed of authority, he would not suffer the poor to be so oppressed." In after existence this feeling was displayed in the most touching and interesting manner, in instances which need not here be repeated. We have before spoken of his humanity and generosity in public life. The exercise of these virtues was not limited to great occasions and extraordinary occurrences. Wordsworth has beautifully said,

The primal duties shine aloft like stars;  
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,  
Are scattered at the feet of man, like flowers."



It was Burke's delight, when disengaged from the immediate prosecution of his patriotic duties, to administer those blessed charities wherever fit opportunities—and they were not seldom—presented themselves, or could be discovered by his benevolent inquiries. The excellence of his heart was shown, among other instances, in his attention to his poor friends in Ireland, in his kindness to an unfortunate woman, whose interesting story is related by Prior, in his unlimited generosity to Barry the painter, and to a youthful, poor and friendless adventurer, afterwards an eminent poet, whom we presume to have been the Rev. George Crabbe, in his encouragement to all young adventurers of talent, and in his humane treatment of the French refugees. What enhanced the value of his kindness was, that he always endeavored to lessen the obligation in the view of those who received it, and conferred his favors in the most free and liberal manner possible; with none of that pity which disgusts a delicate mind, and none of that haughty ostentation so degrading to its object. Without professing to be a patron, he acted like a father towards all individuals of merit who applied for his assistance or support; and as no man ever possessed a quicker discernment of worth, under whatever shape it might be hidden, he often experienced the rare pleasure of bringing a true child of genius from obscurity, and became the unobtrusive instrument in forming and fixing the characters of men who afterwards displayed the most eminent abilities.

Burke was ever ready to subscribe to charitable purposes. Many plans for improvement in the condition of the poor were marked out by himself, and carried into execution under his superintendence. It was his constant aim to render all men happier and better who came within the sphere of his influence. He was beloved by the tenantry of his estate to a degree that is very seldom witnessed. His great kindness to his poor countrymen and distant relations in Ireland is very evident from several of his letters, which afford interesting proofs of that lively benevolence which does not seek for great occasions alone, but is daily and ceaselessly flowing out upon the lowest objects of its bounty. Such instances are not over-abundant in the lives of politicians constantly involved in lofty and arduous duties. Our limits do not permit us to quote them.

The whole circle of Burke's feelings was exceedingly tender, amiable and affectionate—open to all the social sympathies and pleasures, and peculiarly alive to the charms of domestic attachments. He was fond of his friends, and seemed to have a heart-felt satisfaction in giving them pleasure or doing them good. He was fond of children, and delighted to sport with them; a trait never observed but in those of genuine sensibility and kindness. It is rare, very rare indeed, that so much true, unmingled, unaffected tenderness is joined to such wonderfully powerful abilities.

His keen sensibility, awakened and called into ungovernable exercise on account of his son's death, was, it is well known, the cause of some affecting circumstances, which gave rise to the malignant,

though transitory report of his insanity. When we consider his unexampled attachment to his son, and the peculiar aggravations that attended that terrible calamity, it seems to us wonderful that Burke should have survived it so long. He was accustomed to consider Richard as "a finished man"—"an incomparable person"—in every respect superior to himself. He looked upon him with proud fondness, as the worthy successor and preserver of his own name and honors. From the blight of those hopes he never recovered.\* His grief threw a tinge of melancholy over all his eloquent writings after that period. It is the source in them of those frequent sentiments, allusions and reflections of a deeper and truer pathos than can be found anywhere else in the English language. They are so exquisite that we cannot refrain from presenting one instance of them to the view of our readers, though the consideration of Burke's innumerable literary beauties forms no part of our present subject. In a letter dictated to one of his friends in Ireland, on the affairs of that country—the last letter ever dictated by him on political affairs—after speaking of the near approach of his death, and his lamented inability for active exertion, "I could do nothing," he continues, "if I was still stronger, not even *Si meus adforet Hector*." It is needless to say anything on the extreme pathos and beauty of this allusion to the venerable, unhappy Priam.

Burke's manners in his own domestic circle of retirement were frank, hospitable and cheerful, with delightful affability and condescension. He never allowed the vexations of public life to intrude themselves upon his social happiness, or to tinge his thoughts or his speech with bitterness. None ever experienced his hospitality who did not depart from his roof with regret, and remember the time passed in his company as the happiest portion of their lives. Those who lived long in his family, or were endeared by intimate relationship, looked up to him with a mixture of love and veneration, the legitimate result of the observation and experience of his mildness, benevolence, and tenderness on the one hand, and of his wisdom and genius on the other.

He was so little versed in the routine of fashionable life, as to be

\* The following affecting exhibition of the depth of his feelings on this subject, is extracted from one of his letters in the volume of his correspondence with Dr. Laurence. It was written but a short period before the end of his life, and probably just after his return from the medical springs at Bath. "Very few of the objects which my dear Richard had on his mind in dying, are, thank God, left wholly unaccomplished—the deliverance of Ireland from the hands of the Job ascendancy excepted. That was nearly done too—but Providence, for reasons above our wisdom, has suffered that great affair to be snatched out of the hands that alone seemed made for it. However, he was saved that pang, worse than any he could have felt in the parting of that fairest of all souls from a frail human body. Here we are, and with thankfulness we acknowledge it, returned to that house, in which we had many such moments as we never can see more. Our thankfulness, very sincere I hope, did not hinder us from feeling that we were come to a place in which there was none to rejoice in receiving us; none in whom we could rejoice by being received!" This volume does not merely display the keenness of his sensibility, and the goodness of his heart; it is full of additional testimony to the truth of his principles, the integrity of his motives, and the perfect consistency of his conduct. It exhibits the liberality, grandeur and comprehensiveness of his views on many political subjects of the very highest importance, and throws new light on some of the most interesting passages in his life.



totally unacquainted with the science of gaming in any of its modes from card-playing down to the business of laying wagers in the race-grounds; an employment in which Fox and many of the nobles and men of high rank in the kingdom were accustomed to degrade their characters, and ruin their estates, and dissipate their energies of mind. "Burke understands everything," said Gerard Hamilton, "but gaming and music." We need not suggest how powerfully the strict morality of his private life must have contributed to extend his usefulness and influence in public. It rendered him the moral censor of the empire and of the age—in all things but harshness and stoicism, a perfect Cato.

We can hardly imagine how a man of such vast and varied public employments could find time in private life to devote to the business of farming. It was a favorite employment with Mr. Burke to attend in person to the agricultural improvement of his estate. That his skill and knowledge in the practice of agriculture were equally remarkable with his other endowments no man can doubt who has perused his "thoughts and details on scarcity." He is said to have predicted a bad harvest which happened in 1795, and to have carried to London his coach nearly full of young wheat ears, in order to prove to his friends in town the truth of his prediction, though he had not been able to make his neighbors in the country believe it. He surprised an eminent literary and political individual, who visited him at Beaconsfield, by going into an account of the progress and improvements in farming, with a history of the taxes, rents, and alterations for several years in the rates of the poor in fifty parishes of the county, with a minuteness and accuracy as great as if he had spent his whole life upon those subjects.

In conversation no man ever equalled him but Dr. Johnson; and Burke's conversation possessed a charm of which Johnson's was destitute, as well as that of every other member of the far-famed Literary Club. It was perfectly unaffected—perfectly free from that continual effort at display, that evident and painful strife for superiority, which is sometimes apparent in many of them to a really ridiculous degree; they seemed as if they were talking for a wager. While exhibiting his powers of conversation, Burke seemed totally unconscious of their extraordinary excellence; and there never appeared the slightest effort, or most transitory desire to impress upon his hearers the conviction of his superiority. No human being was ever more free from the slightest tincture of vanity. He never wished to dictate, and when any loud talker was in company, or whenever the lexicographer seemed desirous to usurp the conversation, Burke did not appear at all disposed to interrupt him. Johnson's vanity in this respect made him almost ferocious if at any time he saw the admiration of the company concentrated on any other person than himself. There was a mingled humility and dignity which adorned the mind of Burke, and spread an indescribable charm over his manners.

A short notice from Mr. Hardy, the biographer of Lord Charle-

mont, gives one a better idea of his conversation than any labored description can possibly do. "One of the most satisfactory days," says that gentleman, "perhaps that I ever passed in my life, was going with him *tete-a-tete* from London to Beaconsfield. Every object of the slightest notoriety we passed along, whether of natural or local history, furnished him with abundant materials for conversation. The house at Uxbridge, where the treaty was held during Charles the First's time; the beautiful and undulating grounds of Bulstrode, formerly the residence of chancellor Jefferies; and Waller's tomb in Beaconsfield church-yard, which before we went home we visited, and whose character as a gentleman, a poet and an orator he shortly delineated, but with exquisite felicity of genius, altogether gave an uncommon interest to his eloquence; and although one-and-twenty years have elapsed since that day, I entertain the most vivid and pleasing recollection of it." An Irish literary lady speaks of him as "a most delightful companion, who had the art of rendering the timid easy in his company. His conversation, which was often serious and instructive, abounded at other times with wit, pleasantry and good humor; whatever subject he spoke upon, and he spoke upon all, he excelled in as if it had formed a particular study; and his language was distinguished by a fascinating simplicity, yet powerful and appropriate beyond what I can tell." Johnson happily described his "stream of mind" as "perpetual." Profound wisdom and clear reasoning, rich sentiment and delightful wit, nobleness of thought, vast and manifold knowledge, combined with the gorgeous imagery of an imagination magnificent beyond all conception, and glowing with the warmth of his benevolent feelings—these were the qualities that rendered his conversation so splendid, so enchanting and instructive.

We have not yet mentioned the crowning glory of Burke's existence, without which it would indeed be imperfect, and would add another to the long list of great and admirable men, whom the pious mind is forced, at times, to contemplate with regret. No blot rests upon the memory of Burke, even in the most religious vision. He possessed a sincere and unaffected piety; having, in his own language at the season of his death, "long sought the mercy of the Redeemer in unfeigned humiliation, and looking towards it with trembling hope." In this sentence we may discover the secret source of many of those wonderful virtues that gave him such unlimited influence over the minds of his countrymen, and rendered him so infinitely superior even to the worthiest of his contemporaries.

In the great subject we have been contemplating, we cannot but observe a proof of the benevolence of Deity, which does but too seldom occupy our minds. What better evidence of that attribute can be named, than his goodness in granting us from time to time, amidst the degradation of mankind, such glorious examples of utility and greatness; in raising up a being constituted with such rare perfection, and so wondrously adapted to the fearful exigencies of the period in which he lived; in sustaining him under the pressure of his



mighty sorrows, arming him with moral energies to repel the temptations to corruption that were overcoming multitudes around him, and supporting him against the fierce opposition he had to encounter ; in making him so distinguished an example of the vast amount of good which one single individual may have it in his power to confer upon his own country and the world, and in blessing his last scene with a hope so humble in the merits of his merciful Redeemer. Blot out the mind of Edmund Burke from the moral creation—cancel the tale of his life from the memory of men—strike off the sublime career of his existence from the pages of history—annihilate the record of his consummate wisdom—make his immortal eloquence as though it had never kindled—and what a fearful chasm would be left ! Such a career, such an example, such a mind, is a treasure to the world, whose full value can be accurately measured only by that Being, who brought it into existence, and again received it to himself.

---

 SPRING.

O COULD I give my spirit way,  
 As this glad, glad'ning Spring  
 Comes o'er the hills and woodlands gray !—  
 The transports of the string  
 Well swept, the carolling of birds,  
 Should not, in strains more clear  
 Than my blithe roundelay of words,  
 Proclaim the new-born year.

As springs the skylark from her dream  
 Upon the dewy bough,  
 To greet with upward wing the beam  
 That tips the mountain-brow,  
 So goes the heart out with her song  
 For Spring's returning course—  
 Spurning the throng, the shackling throng  
 And measured tread of verse.

She comes ! she comes ! her retinue  
 Of little scouts is here—  
 With heralding of tint and hue  
 And silver throats of cheer  
 For her approach. On—on they troop,  
 The old gray wood to thrill,  
 Up 'mid her desolate boughs,—or stoop,  
 With whispers for the rill.

The mellow earth hath now a touch  
 To win th' enthusiast's tread ;  
 A smile to woo him to her couch,  
 Soft bosoms for his head.

Bleak, late, and ringing to the fall  
Of hurried feet she lay,  
Enchain'd in obdurate winter's thrall,  
To ruffian blasts a prey:

Her tattling fountains cold were seal'd—  
Or gave their waters up  
Like struggling throats, where life doth yield  
Reluctantly her cup.  
The seal is off again!—again  
With merry lapse they leap,  
Recounting as they seek the plain  
Their joy from steep to steep.

The young year's flush with cheer endues  
Earth's sober sackcloth fast;  
As Hope with germ of promise strews  
The mantling of the past;—  
And embryo life swells forth, amain,  
In bud and blade and brake;—  
The skeleton trees prepare again  
Their livery to take.

And life is thrilling youthful veins,  
And kindling in the eye;  
Young hearts leap on with readier reins,  
And thoughts drift wilder by;  
There's joyous tumult in the play  
Of bosoms pure and fair;  
And in the toss of locks that stray  
All liberally there.

She comes! she comes!—who does not know  
Her feet upon the hills,  
Nor recognize her vesture's flow  
As early zephyr fills  
Its folds?—or sees her step unlock  
The icy hearts of mountains,  
And joys not as the obdurate rock  
Yields up th' imprison'd fountains?

Z.

*New Haven, May 4th, 1829.*

---

QUIT-CLAIM.

How endless are the diversities of the law! How infinite the modes of its application to our ever-changing interests! What conceivable modification or combination of the circumstances of human society is there, to which it cannot adapt itself? What character, it cannot mould at will? What principle, it cannot control or annihilate by some of its myriad influences? The shade and the shine of life—the ups and the downs—the ins and the outs—the “soft golden calm” of its summer sea, and the bitter storm of passion that lashes



its angry waves into foam, and lifts up its voice of roaring even to the skies—all are subject to its word—obedient to its minutest whim. Its very caprice is omnipotent. It makes, and it unmakes—and gives light or shadow, as it pleases, to every picture of life. Even the stars of our very dreams (nay, worthy reader, put by that look of incredulity, till I come to reckoning with you in the sequel) are lit up and put out at its bidding—and the flame of poetry and the torch of love, kindled or extinguished, by a touch of its magic wand. Would you study human nature, in all possible attitudes—would you see the heart laid open to its inmost chamber, every line and feature brought out into bold relief—take the law as your profession. The *study* may be dry; and so is any apprenticeship. But the *practice* is full of incident.

I well recollect how different were my views of this subject, at the commencement of my professional pupillage. I had just taken my degree at College; and, for the first time in my life, began to think, (as the vulgar phrase has it,) that something must be done for a living. For I was not the fool to suppose, that the two ideas and a half, which formed the sum of all I had learned in four years at Bowdoin, (and I was as diligent as the best of them,) would answer my purpose for life. I cast a rapid glance at the opening of several paths, that lay stretched out before me. For active business I was wholly unfitted by my early prejudices; my father, whether intentionally or not, I cannot tell, having preoccupied my mind with the impression, that it was vulgar and plebeian. To think of the holy office, was desecration. For the healing art I had some respect: but the gaping, bleeding wound—the inevitable wrench at the well-set tooth—the last agonizing grasp for departing life, my nerves were too delicately strung to think of them, without a chill of horror. The profession of literature I should have desired as a pinnacle. To have been an author, known and read by half the world, would have been wealth and glory to me. But for that, in these days of gossip and refinement, one must have seen the world—must have read every thing, and heard more, must have flirted with nature and society every where and in all times—and lastly, must be as diligent and laborious as Sysiphus, and as fruitful as the earth. I was none—nothing of all these, and therefore without hope. The law alone was left, and I entered a student in my father's office. But oh! the dreary prospect! a whipped school-boy never returned to his oft-attempted task, with half the desolate sensation, of dull, tedious, horrible necessity, with which I then looked forward on my slow progress through the heavy tomes of my father's library. It was always my temper, to redouble exertion, and multiply my forces, when anything before me presented a difficult or disagreeable aspect. Accordingly, I assaulted the outposts of my profession with a kind

of doleful desperation. The disagreeable was soon past. My favorite study, human nature, seemed every where linked with that of the law. And, before I had completed my dreaded three years of preparation, I became a perfect enthusiast in it. I have now been, several years, "my own man," prosecuting the practice of my profession *con amore*.

The sun of a soft, clear September day, had just gone down. The thoughtful twilight was beginning to breathe its quiet influence over the settled features of one of the sweetest landscapes in the world. The day had been one of bustle and noisy cares, and the calm of this hour was grateful to my wearied senses. I sat in my office window, my eye roving careless and inattentive, over the shaded and rapidly changing features of the scene, that lay like a living picture before me. I had given a loose rein to fancy, and was indulging in one of those refreshing reveries, which are to the careworn, harassed mind, what short excursions into the country, in the balmy month of June, are to the body, exhausted by the weary labors of winter, and depressed by the enervating changes of Spring. My mind was away among its own creations—busy in decyphering the shaded lines of its own dim future, which ever, at such seasons, are flitting before it. It was a day-dream of life, and now began to assume the visibleness and distinctness of a picture, to the inward eye. The past, and with it my boyhood and youth, were like the waters of a swift stream gone by. The future was rolling brightly down through the fairy fields of an imagined paradise, rich with all the golden promises of hope—and just obscure enough in the distance, to be left wholly to her and Fancy. My morning of life flown by—the forenoon fast hastening to its close—the broad, sober noon of manhood just within my reach—the warm fanciest, the glowing, fiery ardor of my younger days sensibly and steadily waning, and giving place to that cautious and tempered evenness of spirit, which, while it fits us for the purer, holier duties of domestic life, the hallowed repose, the secure blessed confidence of a retreat one can call his own, seems, at the same time to demand a *dulce domum*, a hearth and an altar for the spirit and the offering—these all, with their minute shades of circumstance, the nice and the delicate degrees of the fitting and the appropriate, the needful and the indispensable—were up before me—not like the flitting shadows of a mere evening dream, but in all the vivid distinctness of things that have an existence. I thought of my solitary bachelorship—of the rareness and (must I say it?) the insipidity, of those little familiar incidents, which, in warmer days, had often led me into downright flirtation, and, sometimes, almost to a declaration of love. I thought of the temperate flow of the blood in my veins, and the slow, but perceptibly cooling process of years upon that flow. I gazed upon the



world—upon myself—and felt the dreariness of being alone;—felt an indescribable shuddering come over me at the thought of possibly being so, in the solitary, chill, hopeless, down-hill of age—felt—felt—felt—that I *must* have a wife!

Matrimony, blessed, holy bond! it was there, like a girdle of gold beaming in the sky of my hope, and promising to bind me in an indissoluble union with happiness. "Home, sweet home," with its cheerful door thrown ever open with welcoming smiles, and its blessed inner sanctuary ever warmed and brightened with the undying fires of love's holy altar!—it was a vision of perfect bliss, and in my then mood, contained all that was wanting, to make me a completely happy man. I gazed, and glowed, and gazed—examined the picture, fancy had called up, feature by feature, line by line, till my soul was on fire, and every feeling kindling with something like the rapture of my earlier days.

But I was in a wandering reverie still—and a change came over my thoughts. The law, (for once, I cursed its influence) came in, and threw a cold, dark shadow over the sketch, that was beginning to glow, with the coloring, not of truth only, but of *life*,—and of life for *me* too. Cold, icy recollections of scenes in the court room, and tales of the Reporter, came over me. I thought of the many, many suits for breaches of that holiest of promises—the hollow motives, the shameless infidelity, the deliberate falsehood, and calculating cruelty, I had had occasion to witness. The law of divorce, the sundering of those sacred ties which heaven made everlasting, the consequent division, scattering, wandering, and wretchedness of families—came up to my mind. Then rushed in the memory of a thousand unhappy breaches, occasioned by the possession or the want of property—the jealousies, the bickerings, the irreconcilable divisions, and the inmedicable wounds in domestic peace, consequent upon the miserably lame and inconsistent provisions of the statutes of conveyance\*—and I was well nigh doubting the reality, ay, the possibility of the vision I had seen.

But the bright, golden, sunny vision was there still, and I *did* believe it. I yielded a full assent and was just resolving on the last desperate step—the irrevocable dash into the Rubicon, when a gentle tap on the door dissipated the bright vision, banished the bold resolve, half uttered, from my lips, and recalled my scattered senses to the comparatively dull scenes around me, the unpoetic drudgery of a lawyer's office. It was not, however, till the delicate tap was repeated, that I was sufficiently myself to articulate the professional "Come in." The door moved slowly on its hinges, and with a soft, half-fearful step, a stranger entered, and approached the table near

\* See article on the Property of Women, in the December No. of the Am. Monthly.

which I was sitting. It was one of the softer sex ; and her downcast eye and changing color indicated that the business she had to accomplish, was a delicate and difficult one. I arose, and, with becoming civility, handed her a chair, and begged her to be seated. An embarrassing silence ensued. I was about to break upon it, by some of those convenient truisms about the weather or the times, which are always at hand to relieve the diffident and the ungifted, when a gentle movement of my fair visitor's feet, accompanied with a sudden hectic all over the visible parts of her face and neck, gave warning that she was about to announce her business. I drew back my half-formed remark, and yielded the floor to her. The effort to unburthen herself was a difficult one. She wriggled painfully in her chair, made strange figures with her feet on the sanded floor—twisted her handkerchief into a thousand uncouth knots—and moved her head in unison with all these motions. The color went and came in her cheeks, in rapid succession,

Like light and shade upon a summer field,  
 Coursing each other as the flying clouds  
 Now hide and now reveal the sun.

My bowels of compassion were moved within me, but I had resigned the floor, and dared not speak. At length, in a faint and rather confused voice, the agitated fair one began.

‘I—I— came in to ask you, Sir—can you please to tell me, Sir,—what way—two persons who are married—can—can get unmarried—kind o’ dissolve partnership—so—so as—they can marry somebody else, if they please. A—a friend of mine wanted me—just to ask you, Sir—I—I don’t ask—I don’t ask for myself, Sir.

(Heavens ! What a question to follow on the heels of the scarce-departed vision of bliss I had seen !)

Death, or a bill of divorcement, Ma’am, I replied, with some ill-restrained feelings of a no very pleasant nature, can dissolve the holy union. The sacred obligations of the matrimonial vows admit of no other release.

Whether it was the stiffness of my very constrained manner, or the appalling character of the two paths I had pointed out, as affording the only possible retreat from matrimony to a state of single blessedness, that disconcerted her, I know not—but my fair client was extremely uneasy for a few moments.

But—but a’nt there, Sir,—no other way—when both the parties are perfectly willing to separate ? An’t there no way of—of getting rid of each other---when---when they get tired—of living together ?—and—

None at all, Ma’am, but by a regular divorce—unless, indeed, one of the parties chooses to run away. But that would not unmarry them—neither of them could legally marry again.

—None at all—eh !—



A considerable pause followed this interrogatory exclamation.

But what is your case, Ma'am?—Who are the persons concerned? and what the circumstances which induce a wish to separate?—It is possible some remedy may be suggested, when the case shall be fully known.

—No way at all—to get unmarried! It's hard, I'm sure—a'nt there such things as—the husband giving the wife—a—a paper—that he gives her up—a—deed-like—giving up all his—right to her—and let her go?

Certainly not, Ma'am, said I, (with a kind of half laugh which at first discomposed my fair client, but afterwards seemed rather to give her new courage to proceed,) there is no such thing in law.

—No?—it's very strange!—isn't there a—kind of—

If you'll tell me your story, Ma'am, perhaps I can help you to some advice which shall be to the purpose.

But a'nt there now such a thing as—as—a *quit-claim-deed*, like—which a man can give to his wife—that he gives her up to—to herself again?—that is, you know, when both of them are willing to part.

Dominie Sampson! what an instrument of law! It was with extreme difficulty that I restrained a torrent of laughter and fun, that rushed to my throat to get vent, at this ludicrous, business-like suggestion. I could have roared for the whole village to hear. But with much exertion, I retained my self-command, and replied with becoming dignity—

The thing is impossible, Ma'am. Husbands and wives are not regarded by the laws of our country as things to be bought and sold, bargained and conveyed away, like houses and lands. There is no process, but that of a regular divorce, that can possibly untie the marriage knot; and a divorce, you perhaps know, could not be obtained without evidence of very ill treatment, or other improper conduct, on the one part or the other. A mere wish to separate, or the being weary of each other, could not be admitted as a sufficient cause for a divorce.

But—persisted my desperate client—if the husband should be perfectly willing—and if—he should give her a—kind of *quit-claim deed*—that he gives up all his right to her?—I'm sure it used to be so in old Massachusetts.—They gave each other—when they got tired—or any thing—a *quit-claim deed* of each other—their right, you know—and then they went where they pleased—and married any body else, jest as if they had never been married afore—you sure there a'nt no such thing here?—

Certainly not, Ma'am. It's utterly absurd and impossible.

But—

But, Ma'am, it's altogether useless to talk further on this subject, until I am made acquainted with the particulars of the case in hand. I must know your story, and the object of these enquiries.

Here followed a pause of a few moments, somewhat similar to that which preceded the introduction of our strange dialogue—during which, I was busy with conjectures upon the probable explanation of this odd visit and conversation—while my client seemed to be inwardly struggling with some great difficulty, as doubtful whether to give up her cause in despair, or pursue it a little further, by letting me into her whole secret. The latter thought gained the victory, and at length our dialogue was resumed.

Well—I—I—didn't mean—to tell—I—didn't want to let you know—but—ur—Mr. Slow is a great deal older than me—and he's very lame—and rheumatizzy—and—I don't want to live with him no longer—he's so old and rheumatizzy.

Then it is for you, Mrs. Slow, that you ask these questions?

Why—Mr. Slow is so old and rheumatizzy!

It seems to me, Ma'am, that with a woman of feeling, that would be rather a poor reason for wishing to leave her husband, who, on this very account, should claim all the kindness and attention of a wife.

But Mr. Slow is so lame and rheumatizzy all the time—and so old—it takes all my time to tend upon him—and I can't bear it any longer.—And—perhaps—I suppose—

But what will the poor man do, when you leave him, if he's so old and helpless?

Oh! he's as willing as *can be*.—He'll board out, or—something—he's jest as willing as *can be*.

Willing, or not willing, Mrs. Slow, you cant be unmarried. Nor will the law bear you out in leaving your husband, unless for the best of reasons.—Did Mr. Slow ever treat you ill? Can you make out any reasons to justify a divorce, from any improper conduct, on his part.

Why—no—nothing to speak of now—to be sure, he did rather handle me some rough—once—a good while ago—but then we made that all up, long ago—and I spose, cant say anything about it now.

Then, Ma'am, there's no reason why you should not remain the wife of Mr. Slow, and his wife you must remain, till death cuts asunder the tie. And it is your plainest duty, to go home, live quietly with your husband, and take care of him kindly. The law can never decree a divorce, in circumstances like yours.

Are you sure he cant jest give a *quit-claim deed*, and let me go? He's jest as willing as *can be*.



Impossible, Ma'am—it would be good for nothing in law, if he should give it to you. A thousand of them would serve the purpose no better, than any piece of blank paper.

Pertinacious and resolute as this admirable piece of constancy and conjugal affection was, she now seemed a little puzzled how to proceed—and there was a short pause in the dialogue. Meanwhile, the *ludicrous* began to gain the ascendancy over the sterner impressions of the scene. I was strongly tempted to follow up the odd notion of my fair client, and wait the catastrophe. It would be a fine joke, thought I—but the sacredness of the marriage tie forbade it.

“A regular divorce!”—my client at length articulated in a low murmur, as if half afraid the words were cabalistic—how long would it take, to get a regular divorce,—sposing we should agree—and—kind o’ make up some stories—and Mr. Slow should agree to let ’em go—for he’s jest as willing as *can be*.

Why, if you should both be perfectly agreed about the matter and willing to swear to false stories, made up for the purpose, and could persuade others, as witnesses, to perjure themselves too.

Oh! dreadful! we could not do no such awful things as them—but how long did you say it will take?—We should tell the truth, you know—only jest they would be old stories—and kind o’ make ’em a little *strongish*, you know—and he wouldn’t say nothing agin it—he’s jest as willing as *can be*.—How long afore it could all be done, Sir, if we should agree?

Why, Ma’am, if your husband should make no trouble, and no one else interfere, nor any circumstance in your fabricated evidence delay the proceedings of the court, I suppose you might get through the business in about a year.

Oh! mercy on us!—that wouldn’t never do in the world—we couldn’t wait so long, no ways—I expect him right home very soon.—

Whom?—

The secret was out—It was a sudden unintended allusion, and it was too late to mend it. Running-blushes crimsoned her whole face and neck. She hung her head, laughed and bit her lips, by turns, wriggled to and fro as if sitting on thorns, and seemed wholly at a loss what to do next.

Of whom did you speak?—Mr. Slow?

Why—ur—no—nobody—that is—ur—why I spose—I—could get married again—if—if I was only free—she contrived to articulate, with a kind of convulsive giggle, and a look of mingled pleasure fear, and shame—I expect him home very soon.

Prepared as I was, by the previous conversation, for almost any catastrophe, I was quite confounded by the boldness and complete-

ness of the woman's singular design. I was about to expostulate with her on the extreme folly and wickedness of her wretched scheme of adultery, when she somewhat impatiently interrupted me.

Oh! no—that would never do—we couldn't wait so long, possibly. He'll be home, I dare say, to-morrow.

Now that her whole secret was out, the "gude wife" (?) felt evidently much more at ease than before. She had wholly unburthened herself, and as she was no longer fearful of revealing too much, or anxious about careless allusions, the remainder of the conference, on her part, was as voluble and free, as if she had been talking of her last shopping expedition, or repeating the common scandals of her neighborhood.

No—impossible—we couldn't wait a year, no ways in the world—I'm sure we couldn't—He's coming right home now—looking for him every day.

Who is he, Mrs. Slow?

Why—I spose now I must tell you—I've told you so much—it's George Long—he's been gone away to sea a good while, but he's coming home soon. He said he'd marry me, if I could contrive to get clear of old Mr. Slow—and he's so old and rheumatizy—and then he's jest as willing as *can be*.

Well, Mrs. Slow, I can only repeat to you what I have already said so many times—that you cannot cease to be the wife of Mr. Slow, be he ever so old and ugly and rheumatizy, but by a regular divorce. And, as you have no reasons to justify an application to the law for this purpose, let me advise you to go quietly home take care of your poor old husband, as becomes a good and honest wife, and tell George Long to beware how he disturbs the peace of the domestic altar, or in any way interferes with so sacred a bond, as that which binds man and wife together in holy wedlock.

I reasoned long with her in this manner, pointing out the absurdity, the folly and criminality, of the course she seemed bent upon pursuing. But, desperate inamorata! it was all to no purpose. My logic and my eloquence were wholly lost upon her. She still insisted upon having the deed.

Jest write me a *quit-claim deed*---I'll risk the consequences. Old Mr. Slow will sign it, right off—and never wont make any trouble about it afterwards. He's jest as willing as *can be*.

I should think he would be, Ma'am---pity he's so *slow* to die, since he's so much in the way.---But, I repeat, there is no such thing in law.

Oh! I'll risk the law--- you only write me the deed---Mr. Slow'll sign it right off. He's jest as willing as *can be*. You jest write the deed now---he'll sign it, never fear---and---we expect him home to-morrow.



The thing is utterly impossible, Mrs. Slow, I never heard of such a deed in my life, or of any instrument like it---there is no form or rule for it in any of the Books of Precedents.

Well, any how, you jest write me a quit-claim deed, in the common way, jest as you would write any other quit-claim---only put in that it's a wife---I'll risk it—Mr. Slow is so willing. I'm sure they used to have such things up in old Massachusetts, before I come down, and I know'd some of the lawyers that did 'em too—and they know'd as much, I guess, as any of your new-fangled folks, down east. Come now, you jest write me the deed—I'll pay you for it well.

I'd as lief write you a quit-claim deed, Mrs. Slow, as anything else—and am willing to put into it, anything which you may please to direct. But I tell you again, it will do you no good whatever. If you had a thousand of them, and poor old Mr. Slow should sign them all, they wouldn't be worth a straw to you—a mere string of sand. You would be just as much his wife *then*, as *now*; and your marriage with any other person would be as truly, both in the eye of the law, and common sense, a breach of the seventh commandment, *then*, as it would *now*. And you would be subject to all the penalties consequent upon such a breach of the law.

Well, somehow, I cant believe it so. I guess you dont know so much about these ere kind o' things, as the old Massachusetts lawyers do.—I'll risk it—Mr. Slow's so willing—and then he's so old and rheumatizy—I cant bear it any longer—I *must* have a quit-claim deed wrote, afore I go home, if I can get it, any how—He's jest as willing as *can be*.

But you will still be *his* wife, in the eye of the law, though you should marry forty times. If he ever should choose to claim your services or your property, he can do it. And if you find anybody so foolish and so wicked as to marry you—he will not be your lawful husband, nor will he be obliged to support you a moment longer than he pleases. He may leave you at any time, and the law would allow you no claim upon him whatever.

Oh! never mind—I'll look out for all that---only jest write me a deed now, for Mr. Slow to sign---He'll sign it right off, he's jest as willing as *can be*. I must have a deed, somehow.

My feelings were now considerably excited by the invincible pertinacity and heroic zeal of my fair client. Though the affair looked so serious, at first---the joke now seemed too good to be lost. The humor of the moment was irresistible, and overcame the sterner scruples which had kept me back till now, so—taking up a pen, I hastily wrote, as follows.

Know all men by these presents, that I, Simon Slow, of —, in the county of — and state of Maine, yeoman, for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar to me in hand paid by Elizabeth Slow,

of said —, the receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge, do by these presents, give, grant, bargain, sell, and convey, unto the said Elizabeth Slow, all the right, title, and interest, which I have in and to the person and services of the said Elizabeth Slow---and I do further remise, release, and forever quit-claim, to the said Elizabeth Slow, all, and all manner of right, title, and interest, which I have in and to the said Elizabeth Slow, as my lawful wedded wife, forever discharging her from all services or duties which might reasonably or legally accrue to me, as her husband---and do, by these presents, consent, that the said Elizabeth Slow may join in wedlock with any person whom she may deem proper, without any let or hindrance whatsoever from me—meaning to convey to the said Elizabeth Slow, all the rights, immunities, privileges and franchises, which belonged to her, the said Elizabeth Slow, before her marriage with me.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this — day of September, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and —

Signed, Sealed and delivered }  
in presence of us.

L. S.

There, Mrs. Slow, is the paper you wished me to write. It is just as good, for your purpose, as any piece of waste paper you could pick up in the street, and no better. Mr. Slow *may* sign it—and perhaps he'll feel himself quite fortunate, that he can so easily get rid of so worthless a companion.

Apparently unmoved by my complaint, she took the paper from my hand, and ran it over, with great satisfaction—Oh! that's jest the thing---thank you, Sir, thank you a thousand times---jest the thing exactly---I know'd you was only humbugging me---now you jest sign it, Sir, and then 'twill do nicely.

Sign it? what should I sign it for?

Why, jest as a witness, you know.

Sign, as a witness, before the giver has put his signature to it? in his absence too.---You learn that in old Massachusetts? I wouldn't have my name on such a paper as that, for ten thousand guineas.

Bless me, how you scare me now.---Why---the old Massachusetts folks did so--- but I a'nt afraid to risk it. Mr. Slow's as willing as *can be*---Thank you, Sir--- I guess George'll be home to-morrow---thank you, Sir,——

So saying, the "gude wife," deposited the precious scrip carefully in her bosom, bade me a smiling "good eve"---and never recollecting her promise of a large fee---tripped lightly away.

Shades of Hymen! where was now my vision of matrimonial bliss!——I closed my office with all despatch, hastened home with a quick step, swallowed my tea without stopping to speak or breathe, went immediately to bed, dreamed of Socrates, and Zantippe,



and woke in the morning with a desperate determination, to which I have faithfully adhered, to be a perpetual invincible Cœlebs.

LEX.

N. B. Worthy reader, charge not my fancy with begetting so foul a thought, as that which forms the basis of the above story. I assure you, on the word of a gentleman, it is a sober fact. The poor rheumatizy old cripple, who was so ready, with his own hand, to make himself a widower, actually called, the next day on Justice Oliver, and acknowledged the instrument and the signing thereof, to be "his own free act and deed." Truly, as Sir Aries Anacreon long since said :---

ΧΑΛΕΠΟΝ ΤΟ ΦΙΛΗΣΑΣ—poor old Slow—  
ΧΑΛΕΠΟΝ ΤΟ ΜΗ ΦΙΛΗΣΑΣ—fair George Long—  
ΧΑΛΕΠΩΤΕΡΟΝ—the blisses to forego,  
Of marrying the younger—right or wrong.

---

THE LAMENTATION OF CAIUS MARIUS OVER THE RUINS OF CAR-  
THAGE.

Thou art fall'n, Carthage—Glory's sun is set!  
Bowed down to dust and humble is thy brow—  
Where are the Halls where once thy Senate met?  
A heap of earth, dead, prostrate ruins now!  
Thou art fall'n, Carthage—desolation's blast  
Howls moaningly along the fallen tow'rs,  
Waking the silent spirit of the past  
To pay its tribute—sighs o'er vanished hours!  
Hark! 'twas the wild Hyæna's cry  
Rousing up Silence, striking on th' ear  
Of Echo long a voiceless slumber there!  
And now it falls in one low sigh—  
Along thy Palaces, thy Halls, thy Domes,  
Of mighty spirits once the mighty Homes!

Here is a scene for proud Ambition's eye  
To gaze upon—th' aspiring soul would start;  
And e'en dark Hatred could not here pass by,  
Without some stern compassion in its heart.  
For Scipio conquering and o'erthrowing all,  
Stopt in his headlong course to gaze upon  
Thy perished greatness—glory's awful fall—  
And dropt a tear on ruins he had done!  
Where are thy souls of fire and might?  
When Echo answers to my moan again  
Why start they not to life and vengeance then?  
Rome shrouded thee in gloom and night;  
Rome's son calls on thee—Rome, who laid thee low,  
Thy pow'r, thy splendor, all, at one fell blow!

Oh Carthage ! could thy mistress but have thought,  
 Thus into dust would fall thy haughty brow,  
 The pain she felt when Æneas fled were naught,\*  
 Nor half the torture—could she see thee now !  
 Her soul, warm as the sunbeam of her clime,  
 Had chill'd beyond the iciness of fear  
 To think,—if but a thought it were,—that time  
 Could make thee thus—the thing I gaze on here !  
 Howl on, thou blast—thou canst not wake  
 The deadened spirits of the past to life—  
 Howl on, their ears are deaf to all thy strife—  
 Or could they now of life partake,  
 Back to the shades would stalk each sorrowing ghost—  
 Carthage, thy glory's o'er—thy triumphs all are lost.

January 27, 1830.

ADVENA.

\* I have availed myself of a poetic license here. Virgil and Ovid both make Dido contemporary with Æneas ; historians assert the contrary.

---

#### HYDRIOTAPHIA, OR URN BURIAL.

THE obsequies of the dead are of solemn interest to the living. That mysterious power which with such unerring success has ever been the scourge and destroyer of the human race—which converts spiritualised and beautiful existence into inert and senseless matter, images itself in fearful and uncertain colors upon the hearts of men. It is under the feelings of awe and reverence thus produced, that we find mankind every where doing honors to the dead, and superintending with scrupulous care their funeral ceremonies—as if to conciliate by a most rigid and honorable attention, their general foe. Hardly an exception to this remark can be found among all the people of the earth ; and whether we consider the myriads who have been swept into the ocean of the grave with the tide of past time, or survey only the crowds who are now momentarily hurrying from off the stage of being, we alike witness this principle of reverence for the dead influencing the living to invest them with appropriate honors. Different modes of treating the dead have prevailed among the inhabitants of the earth, varying chiefly according to religious conceptions and circumstances, and sometimes shaped by the prejudices of rulers who have promulgated laws for this purpose. But most of these variations in practice, have existed with regard to ceremonies only, while all nations have conformed in their mode of burial, either to that of simple interment, or to that of cremation. The latter mode is now nearly if not wholly disused among civilized nations, except in a few cases where the remains of the dead require long transpor-



tation, or where individuals have given testamentary directions to this effect. Among instances of this kind will be remembered that of Shelley, whose corpse, in compliance with his request to be buried at Rome, was burned by his friend Lord Byron at Pisa; and also that of the American Henry Laurens, whose body, by his own particular instruction, was burned in his garden, by nine of his favorite negroes.

But as it was in Greece that this mode of obsequies was attended with the most interesting train of ceremonies, we will confine our attention now to a brief sketch of the practice as it existed among this interesting nation.

The first introduction of this practice into Greece seems to have been about the time of the Trojan war, at which period we find Homer assigns this mode of funeral to his dead heroes. The felling of the lofty oaks in the groves of Ida, and their transfer on mules over hill and dale to the beach where Achilles had designed a tomb for his friend Patroclus—the assembling of the Grecian warriors in armor, some on foot and some in chariots to bear the body of the lifeless Patroclus to the spot—their preparation of a lofty pyre, and the burning of the body, upon which the Greeks scatter their own amber ringlets, and sacrifice in honor a whole hecatomb, is all narrated by the great poet with a distinctness and beauty which charms the reader. In like manner the noble Hector, after the ransom of his body, is burned in the presence of all Troy. After having lain in royal state to receive the lamentations of his kindred and friends within the city, to which occasion the poet has given an air of solemn beauty by the introduction of singers who chant funereal dirges, and by the weeping addresses to his dead body of the beautiful Cassandra, the royal mother, and the fair Helen, his corse is borne to the funeral pile under the walls of Ilium. Here in the light of early morning, he is consumed, and his ashes and white bones being collected by his mourning brethren and placed in a golden urn, are veiled with purple mantles, and then solemnly buried and piled around with huge stones.

Funeral pyres among the Greeks were usually composed of trees which maintain a perpetual verdure, such as the yew, the cypress, the fig and the larix. These were considered as emblematical of their surviving hopes, and expressed by their resuming a brighter foliage and color in the spring, the expected restoration of the dead to their original beauty in the Creator. Sometimes, however, the sacred oak was used, as at the obsequies of Patroclus, showing that there was a variation in the form of the pyres, according to the rank of the deceased. This difference is more obvious in the care taken to preserve the ashes of different individuals from mingling with the ashes of other combustibles, kings and princes being for this purpose

burnt in a cloth made of asbestos-stone, which preserved their remains entirely pure, while ordinary bodies were surrounded by tiles or flat stones, which kept their bodies only partially from admixture.

When the tie of life was rudely broken by the coming of death among their kindred, and the reciprocity of expressed love had ceased, there was no diminution of affection, no relapse into the chill of forgetfulness, but the warm pulses of affection quickened in the hearts of the bereaved survivors. Several days were spent in lamentations over the body before it was consumed, during which time there was a zealous exclusion of every thing calculated to excite pleasure or mirth. All ornaments and richness of apparel were laid aside, and arrayed in sable dresses the mourners remained in pensive retirement. The body being carefully washed and made fragrant with costly perfumes, was decked with chaplets of flowers and green boughs, customs surely which are beautifully expressive of tenderness of affection and respect for the dead. When the interval of private lamentation had expired, in the simple preparation of true mourners, the Greeks went forth to kindle their fires around the sacred relics. Having covered them with adipose substances in order to produce a rapid absorption, and laid them centrally upon the pile, with averted faces in token of their sorrowful service, they kindled the fire. As the lighted pyre sent upwards its first bright-colored flames, no bursts of affected passion—no noisy pomp of heraldic preparation stole upon the stillness of that first moment of breathless attention. In an attitude of religious devotion, the mourners stood gazing up to heaven, in mute and tearful expression of their hopes that thither the souls of their friends would be translated. Soon they began to pour libations of wine and varieties of perfumes upon the burning body, and with measured steps they moved in procession around the pile, accompanying their actions with solemn dirges and with the intonations of musical instruments. Anon as the rich sounds mellowed away in distant and expiring pulses, they lifted up their vows and prayers to the winds, which, as objects superior to their control, were fancied worthy of honor and worship, and called upon Boreas and Zephyrus to assist the flames. Could the polytheistical Greeks have only adopted here the supplicatory addresses which distinguish a Christian burial, how would it have added to the religious beauty of the rite we here describe.

Such were some of the ceremonies which prevailed while the bodies of the dead were burning. When the flesh had all become decomposed, the flames were extinguished with wine, and the ashes and bones being diligently collected, and the latter being washed in wine and milk, and frequently dried in the bosom of the mother where they received their first nourishment, they were together deposited in urns



of gold, silver, earth, stone, or wood, according to the rank and condition of the deceased. Grecian urns were usually of a spherical figure, with long necks, and varied in size, the capacity of the largest being about a gallon. They were covered over, some with flints, some with tiles, and sometimes the earth was closely pressed into them, but more usually silken or linen cloths were gracefully thrown over them, and in case they contained illustrious relics, they were adorned with garlands and flowers, with the olive and myrtle. Thus Homer remarks of Hector's ashes,

"An urn of gold was brought,  
 Wrapped in soft purple palls and richly wrought;  
 In this the sacred ashes were interred."

So also he says of the urn of Patroclus,

"Within the tent his costly urn was laid,  
 And over it a linen cloth was spread."

Many of the Greeks with characteristic tenderness kept their urns laid up in a private depository of their own dwellings, where they remained an ever fresh and enduring memorial. Others built tombs in some pleasant spot of ground, which had been hallowed by the frequent presence of their departed friends, where the grouped relics of a whole family might lie urn by urn, and stand touching each other in the places where their names are sculptured. The tomb was surrounded with large stones circularly disposed, and was surmounted with an oval accumulation of earth and stone.

We have purposely forborne in this brief description of urn burial to detail all the ceremonies which stood occasionally connected with it, as some of them appear in the light of mere Pagan civilities. Such were the practices of burning many animals, sometimes slaves and captives, and also the garments of the deceased, with their bodies; of expressing their sorrow by loud cries and striking their hearts with formal effort and tearing their hair; of placing rings, coins and chalices in the urns, and instruments of various kinds, which though valuable now to the antiquarian and historiographer, are evidently by such exposure liable to depredation and robbery; at least we might fear that such would be the certain result, were the curious inspection of the modern lust for gold suffered to operate. Bating these circumstances then, most of which formed no necessary concomitants to the rite of cremation, and we find all the remaining observances well calculated to express the most simple and unaffected grief, and most imposing tokens of tender remembrance and of affectionate expectation with regard to the fate of the deceased. But to understand better this part of our subject, it is necessary to recur to the religious opinions of the Grecian age, where we shall find ample motives for that rigid care and grave beauty which distinguished a Grecian burial.

Two general reasons are assigned for the custom of burning among the Greeks. The first is, that bodies being considered as unclean after the soul's departure, required purification by fire; the second supposes that the soul being speedily freed from its gross and inactive tenement, would be accelerated in its flight to its celestial abode. There is a purity mingled with the superstition of the Greeks, and in no respect does it more fully appear than in the broad distinction which they drew between matter and mind. Deeming the former rude, irrational and incapable of animation but when breathed into by the transforming and enlivening power of the latter, and yet feeling the potent and insidious tendency of sensible objects to degrade the high purposes of the soul, they shrank from such materializing and enervating influence, and zealously turned to contemplate the "image" of a supersensible agency. Though confused with dim and uncertain apprehensions respecting the future state of the soul, yet it was no phantasm which led them to believe in its divine original, and in its liability to become degenerate in the flesh. We do not therefore wonder that in their adoration of the spiritual principle, the people of Greece should apprehend its speedier approximation to its divine Author by a fancied release from the body, and should think necessary to purify it by fire from commixture with decaying matter. Let not the modern speculator on the types and images of the material world—who seeks amid the finite, discordant and irrational things of sense to arrive at the infinite nature and immutable essences of spirit—let not such an one blame our preference of the philosophic conception of ancient Greece. Plato gazed upon the rich order and magnificence of the universe, but it was the beauty and intelligence of the mind that could give to unformed matter such expression and proportion, which he adored, and which he felt himself unable to comprehend but by that emanation from itself in which he was conscious of participating. Plato looked upon the beauties of art—the well proportioned workmanship of men's fingers, but it was still the superior beauty of thought which he admired, that power "which arising at first in human minds in smaller streams from the great ocean of the Divinity, makes them seek still amid all their wanderings to return to it, and to lose themselves in that immensity of perfection." How grand and sublime this conception of that divine philosopher! When we view him thus darting a sublime vision upward to the light and glory of which he humbly felt himself to be an emanation, and through the dimming brightness which almost repelled his ken, still catching those glimpses which, in the awed ardor of his soul, led him to exclaim, "Truth is the body of God, and Light is his shadow," we are struck with wondering admiration, and we feel him justly characterised by one of the most splendid thinkers\* of the present day, as "a

\* Coleridge.



plank from the wreck of Paradise thrown on the shores of idolatrous Greece."

From doctrines like these it will not appear strange that the ancient Greeks should suppose the diseases and death of the body unable to destroy the vital principle, and should seek scrupulously to perform a rite so consonant to their religious belief as that of urn burial. But there is something in this mode of obsequies so exceedingly touching and palliative, that when compared with that of simple interment, it seems a much more preferable mode of treating the dead. To be laid in the dark and cheerless grave, there to suffer progressive decay with the smouldering materials which enclose us—to be eaten by crawling and slimy earthworms who covertly make their tortuous way through relics which once delighted in the fullness of pride and exemption from contamination—which once embodied a noble instinct whose volition breathed them into animated excitement, and whose fervent aspirations and kindling energies of wish and action flowed through the well adjusted conformations that now crumble with putrefaction, all this is too repulsive to be anticipated as our own calamity, and a disposition of our remains too sadly negligent and frightful ever to be reflected upon with calmness by the friends who minister to our last necessity.

All these trying reflections are escaped by an urn burial, and there is something peculiarly soothing in the thought that "he that hath the ashes of his friends, hath an everlasting treasure; where fire taketh leave, corruption slowly enters." Fire is an agent which subserves so many uses, which alone unravels the intimate essences of nature, and presents such various and striking phenomena, that it has always been an object of the deepest interest to the human race, and philosophers of all ages have speculated with regard to its nature. Its splendid emission of light and heat, its immense power and never failing tendency upward have led mankind with a peculiar appropriateness to associate it with the mysteries of the Deity. On account of the pervading nature of fire the Heraclitian philosophy deemed it a god omnipotent and omniscient, and supposed it to constitute part of the essence of the soul; the Chaldeans adored it as a divinity; the Persians to this day worship God under the image of fire, and wherever we look we find this active natural process claiming the deep interest of the human race.

The inurned ashes of our kindred may find a resting place upon the shelves of our own firesides, and a successive family may there range in security from "the iniquity of oblivion," and from becoming "the heritage of serpents." Or should a receptacle in the earth be chosen, let the ground under our own vines and fig trees be opened, and let the urns be there located. They will not crumble, nor suffer our ashes to spill and bones confusedly to moulder, but they will en-

dure like those of the old Grecians, thousands of years, and stand touching each other till the great solution of all things. We love the memory of the dead, and unlike our natures in other respects, we strive to cherish the image of our most grievous affliction. The heart thus purifies from the stain of earthly appetites, and the affections spiritualize as they go out upon the scenes of a future existence. When we reflect how it will conduce to this end, to kindle our pure fires around the bodies of the dead, and gather together their subsided relics for a living remembrance, we are ready to exclaim with an ancient heathen,

*Εμὲ θανόντος, γαῖα μίχ' ὄντω πρὸς.*

S.

---

#### BUNKER-HILL.

No shout disturbed the night,  
Before that fearful fight!  
There was no boasting high,—  
No marshalling of men,  
Who ne'er might meet again—  
No cup was filled and quaff'd to victory!  
No plumes were there,  
No banners fair,  
No trumpets breath'd around—  
Nor the drum's startling sound  
Broke on the midnight air.

There was a "small still voice,"  
As of one from out the grave  
That call'd upon the brave  
To perish and rejoice!  
There was a sound of woe,  
Of heartfelt agony—  
For those who were to go  
That day to do and die—  
There fell the widow's tear,  
Upon her only son—  
Her sole surviving one,  
Who ere the day was done,  
Might be upon his bier—  
There was the thick drawn breath,  
And the parent's parting sigh,  
And the husband's startling cry  
And the lover's moan swept by,  
And all was still as death.

There was no proud array!  
No gorgeous show of military power,  
That lasteth for an hour



And then hath pass'd away.  
 On that eventful day,  
 No monarch gave the word,  
 No hirelings obey,  
 No trumpet's sound was heard,—  
 Nor the war steed's startling neigh!  
 But commanders gather'd there,  
 Stout of heart and strong of limb,  
 Then was heard the chaunted hymn,  
 And the lowly mutter'd pray'r,  
 And the foeman's sullen gun,  
 As slowly he came on,  
 And the loudly peal'd "Hurrah."

Then the strongest knees did fail,  
 And the ruddy cheek grew pale,  
 And the balmy summer gale,  
 A chill o'er many cast,  
 Who had brav'd the winter's blast.  
 There was a distant roar,  
 There was a nearer crash,  
 There was a shout along the shore,  
 Along the hill a flash.  
 Then came the foeman's cry,  
 And then the freeman's gun;  
 A single yell of agony—  
 A groan—and all was done:  
 A battle fought, a victory won!

---

FOREIGN POLITICS.

THE English and the Russians are the only two people that have made permanent conquests in Asia since the middle of the last century; the first entering it on the south at the distance of half the navigable globe from the seat of their empire, while the latter have done nothing more than push forward, between the Euxine and Caspian, the original boundary of their country. The English have now reached as far North and West as Alexander proceeded in the opposite directions, and, on the other hand, the Russians have penetrated south of the Caucasus, to a parallel, which, being prolonged to the Mediterranean, would divide Asia Minor into equal parts.

Russia has achieved her conquests on much easier terms than England, and as her possessions, enclosed by the two great seas we have mentioned, may be considered a principal advanced post of the empire, she will engage in fresh military enterprise on this continent with the best advantage and certain assurance that her rear is secure to the North Pole. Having substantially demolished Turkey

on this side the Hellespont, it is now in her election to enter Asia by the ancient well beaten track that has been travelled since the time of Xerxes, or along the celebrated isthmus, where the frontiers of that continent and Europe first touch.

Whether the treaty of Adrianople shall be looked upon as the deep pledge and solid earnest of a lasting peace, or as a second hollow, insidious, Truce of Amiens, three consequences or inferences at least seem to follow from it.

First, in regard to Turkey, it is but the viaticum of a departing kingdom; in regard to others, it is, to use a figure of Madame de Genlis, like a bale of cotton, thrust between two beautiful porcelain vases, to keep them from nicking and cracking; and again, in regard to Turkey, it is an instrument she can never execute. We propose to make a few remarks on these topics, beginning with the last.

The treaty is one of indemnity and occupation, on the principle of the conventions concluded in 1814, '15, between France and the Allies. The Porte agrees to pay Russia nearly 30,000,000 of our money, partly to remunerate her for the expenses of the war, partly to compensate her merchants for mischiefs and damages suffered in their trade. The first payment, it is agreed, shall be made in ten instalments of yearly periods and equal sums; the second in unequal sums and at four shorter periods. The payment of the second description of instalments regulates the time and manner of the evacuation. For example—on the first payment, the Russian troops retire from Adrianople; the second, beyond the Balkan; the third, beyond the Danube; and the fourth and last, beyond the Pruth. To procure the full and entire liberation of their territory will, therefore, cost the Porte a sum not quite equal to 5,000,000 of dollars, this being the amount of injury to the Russian trade for which, it is stipulated, an indemnity shall be offered. Consequently, Russia holds Turkish territory, not to secure the debt of the government, but that of the merchants. In this arrangement, Russia has adhered to the original ground upon which she entered into the war, viz. to defend her merchants from molestation in the Turkish dominions, their navigation from hindrance and vexations in the Black Sea. Some stipulations in regard to principalities have a more ambitious character.

The degrees by which Turkey has fallen into her present unhappy predicament may be pointed out, in a way perhaps as emphatic as any other, simply by calling over the titles which Russia, in imitation of a beautiful practice of antiquity, has, from time to time, bestowed upon her generals, either for victories or conquests. One of the first in order is Dolgorucky, surnamed Krimsky, subduer of the Crimea; another is Romantzoff, Sadunaiskoi, passer of the



Danube; a third, the celebrated Suvaroff, Rimnitsky, so called from his victory with the Prince Cobourg at Rimnitz; and the last, the well known Count Diebitsch, the Africanus of Russia, styled Sabalkanskoi, the passer of the Balkan. It is, however, desirable to present this subject in a more distinct and precise form. It is, we believe, considered that the first symptoms of decay in the Ottoman empire may be traced back about one hundred and thirty years, to the peace of Carlowitz. This took place in 1699, and on that occasion a treaty was concluded between the Porte, on the one part, and Austria, Russia, Poland, and Venice, on the other. The last named State fell and perished some time ago, so that, after all, the Mussulman has been preceded to his grave by two of the four powers that, towards the close of the seventeenth century, combined and assisted in inflicting upon him his first mortal wound. Another circumstance places in stronger relief the vicissitudes that attend human affairs. For a long time Venice was the constant enemy as well as greatest rival of the Porte; and to her, among Christian states, belongs the sole honor of having been once in possession of Constantinople since it fell into Ottoman hands. Before the treaty of Carlowitz, Turkey held the greater part of Hungary, Sclavonia, and controlled Transylvania. In one of the campaigns preceding this peace, the Ottomans even reached the gates of Vienna, which, as is known, was saved from destruction by John Sobiesky, of Poland. The only favor or compliment the deliverer received for this memorable exploit was, we believe, a sermon preached in his presence by the dean of the metropolitan church, from the text, 'And there was a man sent from God, and his name was John.' Still, even at his time it required the combined efforts of four or five of the European powers, during six or seven campaigns, to hold the Turks at arms length. But either they declined rapidly after this peace, or were completely drained by the wars preceding it. At any rate, the treaty of Belgrade, made in 1739, and one of the most celebrated and remarkable that has been concluded, is usually regarded as the blow of the Matador to the Turkish empire in Europe.

From the peace of Calowitz to that of Belgrade, the Porte maintained itself on a respectable footing. But in the beginning of the last century, Russia, under the auspices of Peter the Great, came into line, and as soon as her fire was distinctly felt, the decay of Turkey became fully apparent. Before this period, the Ottomans had chiefly contended with Austria and Venice; one scarcely ever able to meet them single-handed, and the other thought to have been made bankrupt by the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope. To Peter should in truth be ascribed the signal merit of having conceived and commenced the great scheme of policy now devel-

oped and accomplished, viz. erecting commercial establishments at the mouths of rivers that pass through the Russian dominions, and fall into the Black and Caspian Seas, detaining a free navigation from those water courses to the Mediterranean, and rendering Tartary either independent, or annexing it to Russia.

All great empires fall by echelons. But in all the vicissitudes Turkey has met with, in the greatest variety of combinations into which she has been forced by the politics of Europe, one truth is most apparent, she has been the natural and unfailing ally of Great Britain. We admit that a flaw or a slight negligence at the helm may appear occasionally to have thrown England off her course; but in an instant she has felt again the steady trade-wind filling her sails. In a moment of caprice and irritation, an English admiral appeared, in 1807, off the point of Seraglio. Nothing could have saved this Tartar, wooden city from a general and immediate conflagration, but the awkwardness of the officer, or private orders forbidding a vengeance, at once so extreme and dreadful.

It remains now to be seen whether the considerations that have led England, for nearly a century, (unconsciously, without doubt, on her part, certainly disguised till lately from the rest of Europe,) into an intimate connection with the Porte, are not about to be unfolded and developed. Before the French revolution, the political tide set strong towards the East. Constantinople was the scene of a great drama; the ablest ministers were sent to that residence; there were all the evidences of a vast catastrophe just at hand; all that diplomatic bustle, irreverent activity and mystery, of which we have had so much in these later times, both at Paris and Vienna, sure to take place whenever a score of blue and red ribbons and of black and green portfolios perch and settle upon one point. But the plot was by no means confined to the green room. The designs of Russia, and her means to execute them, were as well known then as now, as much the subject of remark, criticism and speculation, as is quite clear from the political writings and memoirs of those days. Again, England and Russia were then, as now, substantially the leading powers of Europe, for the peace of '56 had thrust France into the class of second states, from which she never recovered till the reign of Napoleon. The first event that drew away the public gaze from Turkey, was the breaking forth of the American revolution; to this succeeded the French. All Europe and half of Asia were, by these operations, moved from east to west. When we see Cossacks from beyond the Borysthenes lying down on a bundle of straw on the Boulevards of Paris, or Tartars from the Ural kindling their bivouac fire with bark stripped from the ancient and stately trees of the Champs Elysées, at first we shall probably mistake the age in which we live; but when



we come to our senses, we are at once persuaded such fearful migrations cannot take place without denoting as well as portending prodigious changes. If the first portion of this epic, represented in Europe, is now concluded, according to the approved rules of the art the scene of the second should be laid in Asia. The Greek revolution; the sudden halt of the Russian troops on the edge of the great plain, at the foot of which lies Constantinople; the difficulty of agreeing upon a prince, sovereign or regent for Greece; the active movements in Persia since at least 1806; these circumstances all indicate, both that some of the European cabinets have, for twenty years, been making preparations against a storm in the Eastern quarter, and that seeds for future wars have been thrown broad-cast upon that portion of the earth.

The high road to India lies through Persia, a consideration of which England has never lost sight since the French expedition to Egypt. In 1808, Napoleon sent General Gardanne to Tcheran. It does not signify what objects he had in view, but the news of the mission gave an indigestion to every Englishman in Hindostan. Upon the heels of the Imperial embassy immediately followed, with the scent of a fox-hound, Sir Harford Jones, and from that time the English have not only maintained, at a vast cost, other ambassadors at the Persian court, but have been extremely busy in exploring all the country to the north of Hindostan. More especially we allude to a mission to aid a residence at the capital of the kingdom of Caubul, performed in 1809 by Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone. Caubul stands between Persia and British India, or, we should rather say, it runs along the northern edge of the great desert, of 500 miles in width, that constitutes the northern boundary of Hindostan. Alexander, in his expedition, penetrated to the centre of this kingdom, where he met the Indus.

The English have distributed subsidies and largesses with as much profusion in some parts of Asia as they have done in all parts of Europe. Dromedary after dromedary has of late passed the great desert, heavily laden with costly presents for the northern Beys and Khans. Since the beginning of the century they have had officers engaged in teaching the Persians the European drill and discipline. Some of them have even been killed as late as 1811 in the Persian ranks fighting against the Russians. Kotzebue, an officer of engineers in the train of the Russian minister, Termoloff, saw at Erivan, in 1817, a body of two thousand infantry dressed in the European fashion, in red coats made of British broadcloth, and armed with Tower muskets. When the embassy passed their front, the music played the English national air, 'God save the King.'

It must, we think, be admitted that nothing, except the balance of trade, is so vexatious and perplexing as the balance of power. It puzzles the politician as much to say what it is, as it does the economist to define value. Prince Metternich of Austria is allowed to have the most delicate hand in this way in Europe. He has been employed all his life in making twelve ounces Avoirdupois weigh as much as a pound and four ounces Troy. As an evidence of the difficulties of statesmen on this subject, England, in 1811, called off Persia and Turkey from Russia, menaced and worried by France. Now, she needs a drag-chain for Russia herself.

No one, we imagine, at present supposes that Russia has designs on Hindostan. But if that power has been engaged at least one hundred years in making regular accessions to her dominions in the direction of Turkey and Persia, why not proceed in the work? No nation ever occupied a more advantageous position for conquests in that quarter. We are aware that the general hypothesis in regard to Russia has been that it was her destiny to conquer Europe. Even Napoleon said, In fifty years Europe will be Cossack or republican. But if the weight of Russia's power lies in the direction of Asia; if, with the exception of the partition of Poland, her conquests have been in that quarter; if she is oriental in most of her habits, and, with the exception of religion, in all her sympathies; if it costs her troops more miles of march to reach Paris than Isopahan; if her great water courses, falling into the Caspian and Euxine, seem themselves to point out the track she should follow, there is some little ground for the opinion that it is the destiny of Russia not to conquer Europe, but to civilize Mahomedan Asia. Is it not time civilization should return to its most ancient, and, on some accounts, most favorite seats; that the rich country, bordering on the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, should be restored to commerce and the arts? The Mussulmans have failed to do this. The most fertile parts of Asia were subdued centuries ago by the most enlightened race of conquerors that has probably appeared; a people of uncommon cultivation and originality of mind; but refusing to mingle with the tribes they reduced to subjection, the different castes remaining perpetually distinct and at variance, have only aided in degrading and brutalizing each other. The best stock now in Europe was made by a cross between the original inhabitants and the northern nations that overran them. The same process is required in Asia. The morals and spirit of the people have not been more worn out and worn down by bad government, than their blood has been run to water, and their facial angle reduced twenty degrees, by the Bourbon process, pursued for ages, of never stepping beyond the door-stone of their



tribe. The intellectual part of man is so justly the object of our wonder, as well as constant attention, that we continually forget how much it is dependent for its most perfect condition and fullest developement on the physical. Under the Caliphs and their descendants the country and the people became decayed and perished. Nothing has been done to counteract the influence of the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope; nothing to rebuild Balbec, Babylon or Palmyra, whose vast and magnificent ruins abundantly show how immense was the commerce once driven, how prodigious the population assembled in those countries. Since the Saracens repulsed the crusaders, history has been silent in regard to them.

The Russians are Christians. They, also, carry there the elements of civilization. The process and the objects of their conquests are those of civilized men. They, already own three or four entire provinces or pachalicks south of the Caucasus. If this should be the limit of their progress it will be the greatest anomaly in history. On the contrary, it is hitherto a rule without an exception that when a fresh, vigorous and warlike people gets only a narrow foothold in an ancient, decayed State, they eventually run through the land like a weed or an epidemic. If not national, hardly to be expected in such a number and variety of tribes, the Russians are, at least, possessed of an astonishing love of country, in the main to be attributed to the influence of the Greek church. During the last century they were much disturbed by frequent insurrections, confined, it is true, for the most part to the precincts of the Palace, and a regiment or two of guards and cavalry, ending by the suffocation of the Prince and the transportation to Siberia of a score of ministers or general officers. But the nation was never convulsed. Still such irregularities betokened unsteadiness and profligacy, and usually attend the decay of States. But at the present time the order of succession appears settled and the government consolidated. We shall, also, add in this place that Russia is, perhaps, better served than any other power in Europe. The oriental structure of her government permits her to employ merit wherever she can find it. She has always had in her service a great number of foreigners, occupying even the first stations. We say foreigners, though where so many different nations constitute an empire, national jealousy cannot widely or deeply exist. Her troops have often lost battles, seldom reputation. Russia, under that immortal soldier, Field Marshall Blucher, has had moments of greater coruscation, but we doubt exceedingly if any people on the continent in the long run has made so good a figure against the French as the Moscovites. No cabinets or diplomatists have produced public documents and State papers whose excellence is more striking and undoubted.

The men represented on some of the ancient *bas-reliefs* dressed in trowsers, with high cheek bones and rough curly beards have

turned out to be the conquerors of the world ;—the Scythians of antiquity, the Russians of our day. Some of the soldiers in the Cossack regiments in Paris in 1814 bore a most striking resemblance in features, expression and costume to the figures in these ancient sculptures, captives following in the train of a triumph. Contrary to their usual practice, these men now appear to be directing their steps towards Persia and Asia Minor. And for the first time they are more civilized and enlightened than the nations they approach to conquer.

The English have already begun civilization to a considerable extent in Hindostan. There is at this time a great European population planted there. To introduce Europeans and their habits into Greece, Persia and the lesser Asia, is for obvious reasons a less difficult task. To be sure this cannot be done by rubbing the lamp. The original population must first be worked up or at any rate worked over. And no portion of that people require it more than the modern Greeks. It has been the fashion of our colleges to teach ancient history and a few of the ancient classics decently well, while the most valuable part of education for a person born to read and write the English language, our own unrivalled classics and erudition of modern nations seem unhappily to be neglected. A young man, therefore, entering into life, hears in the word Greece nothing but Plato or Sophocles, or Aspasia or Homer, Phidias or Demosthenes. Instead of considering the modern Greeks as they really are, and as all people must be that have lived as they have done for more than two thousand years, not quite so fit for self-government as the Mexicans or Peruvians, we really have present to our imaginations nothing less sublime or inflammatory than Marathon, Platœa, Salamis or Thermopylæ. These associations we carry through life, supplying us with an occasional trope or figure of speech for an oration or address, but in reality unfitting us to form an accurate notion of the condition of the individuals that we are all the time mistaking for their own ancestors. Every reasonable person must desire to see the Greeks or any other degraded people rescued from bondage or wretchedness, not because a most wonderful race of men lived upon the same spot 2500 years ago, but inasmuch as all men are, on the one hand, entitled to the benefits of good government and civilization, so on the other they are bound to contribute a share towards the improvement of the human race.

The portion of country, now denominated Persia and Turkey in Asia, is literally in the middle of the earth. The Indian ocean, Mediterranean, Caspian and Black Seas, together with the great rivers that fall into them, present easy and ready means of communication with at least three continents. From this spot sprung the human race. Here Anak founded his family and lineage, corresponding in the history of man much to the Cyclopean buildings in



that of architecture. No part of the earth has borne so many generations. But we know little more about them than the present inhabitants of those countries do about the ruins that lie on the soil;—they ascribe them all to Solomon.

England and Russia represent in Europe the two antagonist principles in modern politics;—the liberal and the ultra. The arms of England have prevailed against France;—the system of Russia on the continent. Spain and Italy have perished and will probably return to the bramble and the bulrush. France appears to be still in the agony of the revolution and the people as much against the government as in '89. When or where or how the next war will begin, or when or where or how it will end, those that live half a century hence, can best, if not only, tell.

---

INTERCEPTED LETTER.

The D—l among the Tailors.

“Then let the D— wear black, I'll have a suit of sables.”

Dear Richard—the greatest excitement is here,  
That has ever been known since the case of the tea,  
And the bolt that has fallen on all is severe,  
But especially heavy to you, Dick, and me.

The sufferers have had a Convention, my lad,  
And the delegates present, were seven times nine,  
Who voted *nem. con.* that their system was bad,  
And the seven in buckram agreed to combine.

They voted that all who were favored in *ticks*,  
Should be, in the time of the credit cut down;  
Which reduces the period from twelve months to six,  
“A heavy declension!” to lads “about town.”

What to do we know not, though 'tis past all enduring,  
But a few of our leaders, Corinthians true,  
Will send a memorial to Mr. Van Buren,  
Who dresses as well as the best of us do.

But the evil will spread, if it be not checked soon,  
And the term will at last be contracted so small,  
That a coat had in May must be paid for in June,  
Which is worse, as you know, than no credit at all.

The Shoemakers next will be roused, and the Hatters,  
Since Tailors have grown so ferocious and *bold*,  
And to us it would almost be life and death matters,  
To pay for our pumps—“ere those shoes” Dick, “were old.”

O.

## THE EPICURISM OF READING.

"He has never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book. He has not eat paper as it were. He has not drunk ink. He is only an animal; only sensible in the duller parts." *Shakspeare.*

I have a friend who sometimes occupies the odd dormeuse at my fire. He has but two traits in his apparent character---indolence and fastidiousness. He lounges in after dinner, rings with the freedom of old acquaintance for coffee and slippers, and, disposing of his elegant but slightly corpulent proportions in a studied posture of repose, is a fixture till midnight. I am fond of his society, for though his fastidiousness is extreme, he has much real refinement, and an exquisite taste in literature. He has not studied much, and disclaims all pretensions to scholarship, declaring that his acquaintance with books arose from a necessity of carrying a volume in his pocket to excuse a rambling propensity in his youth. Personal luxury is his most frequent topic, and on this his eloquence is inexhaustible. Alcibiades was not more voluptuous. Among other refinements peculiar to himself, he eats in summer with an amber-handled fork, to keep his palm cool. Being a plain man myself, I sometimes tire of this vein of discussion, and, to turn the subject, propose reading to him—a suggestion too much in accordance with his indolent disposition not to supersede all others. He leans back in his chair, with closed eyes, and listens—never interrupting me except by some nice criticism, which I always pencil down in the margin, or a request for a French olive---(the Spanish, he thinks, are coarse-grained, and have less pungency.) Not long since, I was reading to him Elia's fine essay upon Books and Reading. He has a passion for Charles Lamb, and always eats his salad at supper with his English edition of Elia open beside him. He says the genial good-humor of it warms his heart, and he sleeps better. When I had finished, he expressed his usual admiration of the author, and then falling into his vein of remark, commented on the subject at uncommon length. He left me at twelve, and I sat down and wrote out, as well as I could remember then, his observations. I had done no more myself than supply the monosyllables of attention, and as these are unimportant on paper, they fall naturally into the shape of an essay. I was much interested myself and though I am aware that his rich tones and expressive manner may have added much to the effect, I cannot but believe that my amusement will be shared by the reader.

'It is a little singular,' said he, 'that among all the elegancies of sentiment for which the age is so remarkable, no one should ever have thought of writing a book upon Reading. The refinements of the true epicure in books are surely as various as those of the gastronome and the opium-eater; and I can conceive of no reason



why a topic of such natural occurrence should have been so long neglected, unless it is that the taste itself, being rather a growth of indolence, has never numbered among its votaries, one of the busy craft of writers.

The great proportion of men read, as they eat, for hunger. I do not consider them readers. The true secret of the thing is no more adapted to their comprehension than the sublimate of Louis Eustache Ude for the haunters of shilling chop-houses. The refined reading taste, like the palate of gourmanderie, must have got beyond appetite—gross appetite. It shall be that of a man, who, having fed through childhood and youth on simple knowledge, values now only, as it were, the apotheosis of learning—the spiritual *nare*. There are, it is true, instances of a keen natural relish. A captive, with a single book, will ponder lovingly every precious line. A boy, as you will sometimes find one, of a premature thoughtfulness, will carry a favorite author in his bosom, and feast greedily on it in his stolen hours. Elia tells the story :—

I saw a boy with eager eye,  
Open a book upon a stall,  
And read, as he'd devour it all ;  
Which, when the stall-man did espy  
Soon to the boy I heard him call  
" You, Sir, you never buy a book,  
Therefore in one you shall not look."  
The boy pass'd slowly on, and with a sigh,  
He wish'd he never had been taught to read,  
Then of the old churl's books he should have had no need.

A pretty instance. Indeed, I dare even suspect the saintly of this taste—gloating in secret over a chance found volume of profane poetry. But it is mainly true that refined taste in reading is the fastidious fruit of indulgence grafted upon that repose of nerve peculiar to a harmonious delicacy of construction. Refined women are generally of this class. Your *bas-bleu*, who digests mathematics and loves Greek, is a large-featured woman---ten to one of a coarse voice and masculine proportions.

The pleasure, as well as the profit of reading depends as much upon time and manner as upon the book. The mind is an opal---changing its color with every shifting shade. Ease of position is especially necessary. A muscle strained, a nerve unpoised, an admitted sunbeam caught upon a mirror, are slight circumstances---but a feather may tickle the dreamer from Paradise to Earth. 'Many a froward axiom,' says a refined writer, 'many an inhumane thought hath arisen from sitting uncomfortably or from a want of symmetry in your chamber.' Who has not felt at times, an unaccountable disrelish for a favorite author? Who has not, by a sudden noise in the street, been startled from a reading dream, and found afterwards that the

broken spell was not to be re-wound? An ill-tied cravat may unlink the rich harmonies of Taylor. You would not think Burton the fine old heart he is, reading him on a tottering chair.

There is much in the mood with which you come to a book. If you have been vexed out of doors, the good humor of an author seems unnatural. I think I should scarce relish the gentle spiriting of Ariel with a pulse of ninety in the minute. Or if I had been touched by the unkindness of a friend, Jack Falstaff would not move me to laughter as easily as he is wont. There are tones of the mind, however, to which a book will vibrate with a harmony than which nothing is more exquisite in nature. To go abroad at sunrise in June, (a feverish dream will sometimes drive me out so early,) and admit all the holy influences of the hour, stillness and purity and balm, to a mind subdued and dignified, as the mind will be, by the sacred tranquillity of sleep, and then to come in, with bathed and refreshed senses, and a temper of as clear joyfulness as the soaring lark's, and sit down to Milton or Spenser, or (not to be bigoted) the Prometheus of Shelley, has seemed to me a harmony of delight almost too heavenly to be human. The great secret of such pleasure is sympathy. You must climb to the eagle-poet's eyrie. You must have senses, like his, for the music that is only audible to the fine ear of thought, and the beauty that is visible only to the spirit-eye of a clear, and for the time, unpolluted fancy. The stamp and pressure of the magician's own ideal must be upon you. You would not read Ossian, for example, in a bath, or sitting under a tree in a sultry noon. But after rushing into the eye of the wind upon a fleet horse, with all his gallant pride and glorious strength and fire obedient to your rein, and so mingling, as at will, with his rider's consciousness, that you feel as if you were gifted in your own body, with the swiftness and speed of an angel---after this, to sit down to Ossian, is to read him with a magnificence of delusion, to my mind scarce less than reality. I never envied Napoleon, till I heard that he loved, after a battle, to read Ossian.

You cannot often read to music. But I love, when the voluntary is pealing in church---every breath in the congregation suppressed, and the deep-volumed notes pouring through the arches of the roof with the sublime and almost articulate praise of the organ---to read, from the pew-bible, the book of Ecclesiastes. The solemn stateliness of its periods is fitted to music like a hymn. It is to me a spring of the most thrilling devotion---though I shame to confess, that, in my profaner moments, the richness of its Eastern imagery, and, above all, the inimitable beauty of its philosophy, stand out somewhat definitely in the reminiscences of the hour.

A taste for fine reading comes comparatively late. Robinson Crusoe will turn a boy's head at ten. The Percy Anecdotes and Arabian Nights are text-books at twelve. At sixteen a forward boy



will read the *Lady of the Lake*, *Tom Jones* and *Peregrine Pickle*; and at twenty, not before, he is ready for Shakspeare, and, if he is of a thoughtful turn, Milton. Most men do not read these last with a true relish till after this period. (The hidden beauties of standard authors break upon the mind by surprise. It is like discovering a secret spring in an old jewel. You take up the book in an idle moment as you have done a thousand times before, perhaps wondering as you toss over the leaves what the world finds in it to admire, when suddenly as you read, your fingers press closer upon the covers, your frame thrills, and the passage you have chanced upon chains like a spell—it is so vividly true and beautiful.) Milton's *Comus* flashed upon me in this way. I never could read the *Rape of the Lock*, till a friend quoted some passages from it, during a walk. I know no more exquisite sensation than this warming of the heart to an old author, and it seems to me that the most delicious portion of intellectual existence is the brief period in which, one by one, the great minds of old are admitted with all their time-mellowed worth to the affections. With what delight I read for the first time the "kind-hearted plays" of Beaumont and Fletcher, and Marlowe, and, above all except Shakspeare, the intense conceptions and passionate beauties of Ford! How I doated on Burton! What treasures to me were the *Fairy Queen* and the *Lyrics of Milton*!

I used to think when studying the Greek and Latin Poets in my boyhood, that to be made a school-author was a fair offset against immortality. I would as lief, it seemed to me, have my verses handed down by the town crier. But latterly, after an interval of many years, I have taken up my classics, (the identical school-copies, with the hard places all thumbled and pencilled,) and have read them with no little pleasure. It is not to be believed with what a satisfaction the riper eye glides smoothly over the once difficult line—finding the golden cadence of poetry beneath what once seemed only a tangled chaos of inversion. The associations of hard study, instead of reviving the old distaste, added wonderfully to the interest of a re-perusal. I could see now what brightened the sunken eye of the pale and sickly master, as he took up the hesitating passage and read on, forgetful of the delinquent, to the end. I could enjoy now, what was a dead letter to me then, the heightened fulness of Herodotus, and the strong-woven style of Thucydides, and the magnificent invention of Æschylus. I took an aversion to Homer from hearing a fellow in the next room to me at college scan it perpetually through his nose. There is no music for me in the *Iliad*. But, spite of the recollections scored alike upon my palm and the margin, I own to an Augustan relish for the smooth melody of Virgil, and freely forgive the sometime troublesome ferule—enjoying by its aid, the raciness of Horace and Juvenal, and the lofty philosophy of Lucretius. It

will be a dear friend to whom I put down in my will that shelf of defaced classics.

There are some books that bear reading pleasantly once a year. *Tristram Shandy* is an annual with me. I read him regularly about Christmas. *Jeremy Taylor*, (not to mingle things holy and profane) is a good table-book, to be used when you would collect your thoughts and be serious awhile—(the “*Marriage Ring*,” excepted in the case of bachelors.) A man of taste need never want Sunday reading while he can find the *Sermons of Taylor*, and *South*, and *Fuller*—writers of good theological repute, though between ourselves, I think one likelier to be delighted with the poetry and quaint fancifulness of their style than edified by the piety it covers. I like to have the quarto edition of *Sir Thomas Brown* on a near shelf, or *Milton’s Prose works*, or *Bacon*. There are healthful moods of the mind when lighter nutriment is distasteful.

I am growing fastidious in poetry and confine myself more and more to the old writers. *Castaly* of late, runs shallow. *Shelley’s* (peace to his fiery heart!) was a deep draught, and our own *Bryant* sits near the well, drinking deeply but silently, and *Halleck* and *Hillhouse* and *Dana* are all steeped in the stream, but dip little for others. The “small silver spring,” will, I fear, soon cease to well altogether, and as it dries back to its source, we shall close nearer and nearer for our daily drink upon the “pure English undefiled.” The dabblers in muddy waters (tributaries to *Lethe*) will have *Parnassus* to themselves.

The finest pleasures of Reading come unbidden. You cannot, with your choicest appliances for the body, always command the many-toned mind. In the twilight alcove of a library, with a time-mellowed chair yielding exquisitely to your pressure, a June wind laden with idleness and balm floating in at the window, and in your hand some Russia-bound rambling old author, as *Isaac Walton*, good humored and quaint—one would think the spirit could scarce fail to be conjured. Yet often, after spending a morning hour restlessly thus, I have risen with my mind unhinged, and strolled off with a book in my pocket to the woods, and, as I live, the mood has descended upon me under some chance tree, with a crooked root under my head, and I have lain there, reading and sleeping by turns, till the letters were blurred in the dimness of twilight. It is the evil of refinement that it breeds caprice. You will sometimes stand unfatigued, for hours, reading on the steps of the library. I have lighted on a volume in a bookstore ere now, from which the hints of the jealous shopman, and all the jostling of customers could not divert me till the end.

And this reminds me (it’s near the witching hour and the story will be apt) that I have not told you of my late mysterious visita-



tions. I do not often indulge in the supernatural (I will trouble you to fill my glass and give me a fresh olive) for I am an unwilling believer in ghosts, and the topic excites me. You shall hear this, however, for its connection with the subject of our conversation. I had, of late, from a temporary weariness of society, given up dining out, and having, of course, three or four more hours than usual on my hands, and with them, from the temperance of my meal, an increased mental activity, I took to an afternoon course of imaginative reading. Shakspeare came first naturally, and I feasted for the hundredth time upon what you know I think his and the world's most exquisite creation, "Tempest." The twilight of the first day overtook me at the third Act, where the banquet is brought in, with solemn music, by the fairy troop of Prospero, and set before the shipwrecked King and his followers. I closed the book, and leaning back in my chair abandoned myself to the crowd of images which throng always upon the traces of Shakspeare. The *fancy* music was still in my mind, when an apparently *real* strain of the most solemn melody came to my ear, dying, it seemed to me, as it reached it, the tones were so expiringly faint and low. I was not startled, but lay quietly, holding my breath, and more fearing when the strain would be broken, than curious whence it came. The twilight deepened till it was dark, and it still played on, changing the tune at intervals, but always of the same melancholy sweetness, till by and by, I lost all curiosity, and giving in to the charm, the scenes I had been reading began to form again in my mind, and Ariel with his delicate ministers, and Prospero, and Miranda, and Caliban, came moving before me to the measure, as bright and vivid as reality. I was disturbed in the midst of it by Alfonse, who came in at the usual hour with my tea, and on starting to my feet, I listened in vain for the continuance of the music. I sat thinking of it awhile, over my tea, but dismissed it at last as a delusion of the fancy, and remembering an engagement at the gay Mrs. ——'s, I was soon in her twilight rooms, listening to a voice that would out-charm all the spiriting of Titania. The next day I resumed my book with a smile at my previous credulity, and had read through the last beautiful scenes of the Tempest when the light failed me. I again closed the book, and presently again, as if the sympathy was instantaneous, the strain broke in, playing the same low and solemn melodies, and falling with the same dying cadence upon the ear. I listened to it as before, with breathless attention, abandoned myself once more to its irresistible spell, and, half-waking, half-sleeping, fell again into a vivid dream, brilliant as fairy land, and creating itself to the measures of the still audible music. I could not now shake off my belief in its reality, but I was so rapt with its strange sweetness, and the beauty of my dream, that I cared not whether it came from earth or air.

My indifference, singularly enough, continued for several days, and regularly at twilight I threw aside my book, and listened with dreamy wakefulness for the music. It never failed me, and its results were as constant as its coming. Whatever I had read,—sometimes a canto of Spenser, sometimes an act of a play, or a chapter of romance—the scene rose before my eye in lively and natural colors, and moved before me with the stately reality of a pageant. At last I began to think of it more seriously, (I will thank you to snuff the candle—the room looks dark) and it was a relief to me one evening, when, as I was getting very nervous, Alonse came in earlier than usual with a message. I told him to stand perfectly still, and after a minute's pause, during which I heard distinctly an entire passage of a funeral hymn, I asked him if he heard any music. He said he did not. My blood chilled at his positive reply, and I bade him listen once more. Still he heard nothing. I could endure it no longer. It was, to me, as distinct and audible as my own voice, and I rushed from my room as he left me, shuddering to be left alone. The next day I thought of nothing but death. Warnings by knells in the air, by apparitions, by mysterious voices, were things I had believed in speculatively for years, and now their truth came upon me like conviction. I felt a dull, leaden presentiment about my heart, growing heavier and heavier with every passing hour. Evening came at last, and with it, like a summons from the grave, a 'dead march' swelled clearly on the air. I felt faint and sick at heart. This could not be fancy, and why was it, as I had proved, audible to my ear alone? I threw open the window, and the first rush of the cold North wind refreshed me; but as if to mock my attempts at relief, the dirge-like sounds rose, at the instant, with treble distinctness. I seized my hat and hurried into the street, but to my dismay, every step seemed to bring me nearer to the knell. Still I hurried on, the dismal sounds growing distractingly louder, till, on turning a corner (give me an olive!—my tongue parches) I came suddenly upon—the foundry of the Messrs. Revere—in whose yard hang the chiming bells just completed for the new Trinity Church. Mr. R. tells me (I'll trouble you to touch the bell for my boots) that a journeyman of his is a fine player, and every day after his work, he amuses himself with the "Dead March in Saul," the "Marseilles Hymn," and such like easy tunes---muffling the hammers that he may not disturb the neighbors.

Good night! Gay dreams to you!



## THE SIMOON.

THE Traveller late had trod the plains  
Beneath Italia's skies,  
Had mused amid her sculptured fanes,  
And where her mountains rise,  
Had caught, within her hallowed air,  
The inspiration purpling there,  
Once breathed, that never dies.  
And now, o'er Afric's sandy waste,  
With panting soul, he toiling passed.

All day the burning sun had beat  
Like fire upon his head,  
The desert, scorched and parched with heat,  
Round, round, unbounded, spread.  
Oft the mirage, with treacherous light,  
Had glittered to his fainting sight,  
And far his footsteps led.  
Like Hope, that creature of the air!  
Which only lures us to Despair.

And visions came, as on he trod,  
The ever widening scene,  
Of pure streams gushing o'er the sod,  
Of wood-shades cool and green,  
Of fruits, that melted in his hand,  
All, all that tell of "father land,"  
And which once his had been.  
But these seemed mockeries to his fate,  
That frowned now, dark and desolate.

He starts—the brassy sky o'erhead  
Reddens to swarthy glow;  
The sands heave wild beneath his tread,  
Like ocean's billowy flow;  
And, rising from the horizon's verge,  
Mountains of fire their swift flight urge,  
A fierce, terrific show.  
And roaring, on the lightning blast  
The red wing of the tempest passed.

He saw the wreaths, hot, quivering, high  
Before him flash and rise;  
The next—they whirled in fury by;  
He sinks—he gasps—he dies.  
In vain, his household hearth beside,  
In burning anguish weeps his bride—  
On those drear sands he lies.  
The wolf and lion claim their spoils;  
Amid his bones the serpent coils.

A. B. S.

*Monticello, N. Y.*

## MR. WEBSTER.

IN attempting the portrait of this statesman we can hope to satisfy but a small portion of our readers. Mr. Webster is a man of too positive a character, and of far too positive a station in the world's eye, to be regarded with indifference by any one; and while we offend, as we cannot fail to do, those who are opposed to him in politics, we shall probably scarce content those, who, belonging to the same party, see only the same device upon the contested shield, and believe, of course, in the perfect infallibility of their champion.

Mr. Webster's appearance is very striking. He is a man of large frame, a little inclined of late years to corpulency, and about the middle height; though from his deliberate movements, and the peculiarly elevated position of his head, he appears much taller. His features are large and powerfully cast. His forehead is of great amplitude, and pressed down heavily over the eye, and the eye itself, deeply set and dark, is thrown into strong shadow by the prominence and lowering blackness of his eyebrows. The lower part of his face is massive, and expressive mainly of energy, but capable of a Protean facility of play, which anticipates articulation as if the shadow of his thought came through. Without being thin, his features have a sculptured clearness of muscle, and the lines of intellectual labor are so deeply and strikingly drawn, as to leave no room for the epicurism indicated by the fulness of his person. His face, altogether, is a remarkable one. When we know what he is, and see him in the exercise of his honorable and professional duties, we feel that it embodies our finest conceptions of greatness; but had we met him first in a solitary place, and caught a glimpse of his dark countenance by a flash of lightning, we should doubt, we are inclined to believe, whether we had seen a demigod or a devil.

Mr. Webster is a natural orator. He would have been as eloquent as he is if Greece had left no model. The first object of the rhetorician, to fix attention, is anticipated when he rises, and he holds his audience at will by the same spell—the natural impressiveness of power. His most ordinary sentences fall from him with a cast of strength. He commences with a deliberate simplicity, expressing himself in language of fine nerve and clearness, and having about him that confident and calm self possession which a conviction of right is alone supposed to inspire. The exordium in his more dignified speeches is a model of Theophrastian elegance—flowing and full without ornament. His voice during its delivery, and in the early part of all his efforts, is very impressive. It is an instrument of all compass, and when not impassioned, there is a depth and fulness in its tones, which give to its most familiar cadences, a truth-like and



imposing earnestness. Of his gestures, he is as sparing as of his figures. He stands firm and erect, and disposes of his hands with the quiet carelessness of ordinary conversation, often with very little regard to rhetorical proprieties. His whole appearance at such a moment, is less that of an orator than of a man absorbed in the declaration of an honest opinion, and careless of every thing but to impress what he believes to be the truth upon his hearers.

As the interest of his theme deepens, all his faculties expand or take a new character. His large black eye dilates and kindles, something like color plays beneath his clear dark skin, his voice ranges through all its powerful notes, sometimes, indeed, rising too high for melody, and his gestures, frequent and sometimes violent, are accompanied with a forward fling of his body, which is more emphatic than graceful. His language gradually assumes a more graphic character, but loses none of its nerve and clearness, and has, even when most figurative, rather the solidity of sculpture than the grace of flowers. Whatever the strain of his thought, (and the mocking-bird is not more various in his music than he in the changes of eloquence,) his features and action body it forth with the utmost fullness and meaning. His recrimination, his retort, his scorn, are hurled upon their object with a deadly skill and unsparingness almost fiendish, and his courtesy, where the occasion is of sufficient importance (as in the late splendid contest with Mr. Wirt) has a bland and fascinating witchery which has been found irresistible even by his enemies. It would be difficult to say, in the words of an old writer, "whether his smile is more angelical, or his sneer more diabolical."

Mr. Webster, to reverse Coleridge's remark upon Southey, does not so much possess, as he is *possessed by* his genius. He is an ambitious man doubtless—because ambition is inseparable from greatness. The stamp of his genius, however, and its high-minded workings are visible in all that he does. There is no minute policy about him—no fountain of action that does not spring from a depth unreached by the troubling of common and mean motives. He follows the great impulses—the tenth-wave heavings of his mind, alone. He has committed political errors, and he will doubtless commit more—as who in his situation, has not and will not. But the public, we feel, and all men who know him must feel, are sure, whatever the trust committed to him, that, if he errs, it will be *only* error. There are no springs in his nature small enough for intrigue. If he were not above, he would be incapable of it. We have heard him, probably from this trait of character, accused of a want of tact and sagacity. It is like taunting the lion that he has not the nose of the jackall. We venture to say, that even in the smaller business of the law, he has enough for an honest man, and every one knows that on an open arena, his alertness and skill in the contest of wits are unsurpassed.

There is a quality of boldness, and, where it is necessary, an indignant courage in his nature, which, if they are not safe traits for the statesman's own interests, are safe for the people. We should choose the character with all its faults in preference to its opposite. We would pass over his impatience of contradiction—his overbearing imperiousness toward the inferior members of his profession—his sometimes impolitic rashness. We would bear any fault that could exist in such a character rather than this same "sagacity," in which he is deficient. His exposure of Duff Green is a fine instance of this. What politic man would have so bearded the lion in his den?—yet what honest man in the nation, did not, after it, honor him more?

---

THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

WE have often wished that with a flourish of a pen we could conjure to our side the authors of articles lying before us. It would save us a world of perplexity and time. There for instance, on the other side of our inkstand, lie a dozen manuscripts—all of them too good to reject, but all unnecessarily faulty, and twice too long. With a broad-nibbed pen, now, and the permission of the author's nerve, we could make a difference in their bulk and friction that would at least, double the velocity of thought. With the permission of those of our readers who are not writers, we will in a parenthesis mention one or two common faults for their benefit and our own.

Much time, words, ink, and paper, is wasted on introductions. Magazine writers should be brief and crisp—dashing *in medias res* at the first sentence. Sink rhetoric. Nobody cares how you came to think of your subject, or why you wrote upon it—of course, the *exordium* is unnecessary. Commence with your leading thought and avoid irrelevant digressions. You may be less scholastic, but you will be more original and ten times as amusing.

Do not be too grave. It is one of the great faults of American magazine writers. Periodical readers expect to be amused, and would exchange all the dignity of a Number for a witticism. Not that you should be flippant or funny—but you should write as if your heart was warm with humor, and good-humor, and you could not bar gaiety out. Nothing is so stupid as a mere dissertation—without anecdote, without facts, without sprightliness or novelty or wit. Cultivate humor—quiet humor. Everett has given fine examples of it. Half the world would read his review of Basil Hall, without suspecting that there was any wit in it. To the other half, as you know, it



is a pheasant's brain—a Lucullan luxury. We would have pleasantry even in politics and criticism. It cannot come amiss in a magazine paper.

Avoid the familiar impudence and slang into which smartness so easily degenerates. A gentleman is as much known by his style as by his manners. There is a school of critics and scribblers embracing some talent, in this country, who write as if every man of genius in the land had drank small beer with them. They address an author, whom they never saw, by nickname, advise him upon his faults in the second person, and talk of him and themselves with a promiscuous freedom scarcely warranted by the closest personal intimacy. John Neal is the founder of the school, though his imitators have caught little from him except his faults. The glitter and saucy freedom of his style is extremely apt to mislead a young writer who has more quickness than depth, and more desire to shine than good breeding.

Take it for granted that your article, at the first draught, is four-fifths too long. Cutting down requires resolution—but you gain experience as well as improve your article, by every excision. For the mode of doing it—begin by crossing out all explanatory sentences. Leave nothing but simple propositions. Young writers always explain a thing to death. Erase next every thing that you have stolen from the *American Reader*, *Elegant Extracts*, the *Complete Letter Writer*, and well-thumbed authorities in general—there is a chance of their not being thought original. After you have cleared it of all incumbrances, (your own good sense will suggest other processes) run a thread of dovetailing passages through the gaps, and if it does not sound better to your own ear, to say nothing of the friend to whom you read it, we are no judge of Attic.

Never commence an article till you know what it is to be about. Some writers have an incontinence of words, and will dilute you an idea to twenty pages. And some writers again will take up a topic that has been worried through college forensics, and girls' boarding schools since Time was, and beat its dead arguments over the scone, with all the sublime anger of Bobadil. Let the subject be new. If it must be old, write a travestie. I would rather hear Shakspeare proved no play-writer, than ever so ingeniously lauded. No matter what you write about—so you do it well. Choose your theme from Parnassus to a pill—in literature as in vegetation, a small acorn will grow to a very large tree.

Above all write briefly. A magazine paper should never exceed six pages. And this reminds us to apologize for the length of the Burke article concluded with this number. Its great elaboration and its political justice must excuse it. To the lovers of Burke it will need no apology, and to those who have not studied him, it

should be valuable—as being the only attempt ever made to disprove, by laborious collation of passages and research into facts, the charges of common fame against the integrity and consistency of that great man. The reader will not need to be told that it is conclusive. We must apologize also for the abrupt close of the “Ghost-seer.” It was translated for us by a friend who is reading German, and who was not aware that it had appeared in Roscoe’s German Novelists—a book to which we refer the reader for the conclusion. And since we talk of articles, the paper upon the Removal of the Indians in our last number but one, has been published in a pamphlet with notes, containing a valuable accumulation of facts relating to the civilization and Christianity of the Southern Tribes. The article itself contained intentionally no argument, and was meant merely as an appeal to the attention of the public. The author has since however, thought best to bring together the objections to Gov. Cass’ theory, and to our apprehension has satisfactorily convicted him both of false reasoning and misrepresentation. We will quote one passage from the notes as an example:—

“We have not done with this matter, touching the Indians in the State of New York. It would seem that the Supreme Court of that State was mistaken, as to the condition of the remnants of tribes, remaining there. Though we entertain a sincere respect for the Chief Justice, and consider him a very able and a very upright judge, yet it is due in truth, and to the present issue, to say, that the decision, which he announced, was overruled by a higher tribunal; viz: the Court for the Correction of Errors. But does Gov. Cass tell his readers of this? Does he let them know, that the decision, to which he refers no less than six times, was overruled, and therefore is not law? Does he mention the fact, that Chancellor Kent, after a most elaborate examination of the matter, came to the conclusion that Indians in New York are *not under the laws of that State*, but are *distinct communities*, and, in a certain and very important sense, *independent sovereignties*? and that in a numerous court of thirty members, the decision of the court below was overruled, and the reasoning of the Chancellor sustained, with but one dissenting vote? Does Gov. Cass announce these facts? No such thing. It would not answer to let the readers of the North American know them. What! spoil an argument by telling the truth!

“But our readers will ask, Is it possible that such barefaced deception can have been wilfully practised? It is impossible that it should have been otherwise; for Gov. Cass actually quotes part of a sentence and repeats his quotation, from the very argument of Chancellor Kent, to which he was referred by the report of the decision in the court below; both decisions being in the same volume. He takes care, however, not to give any indication of Chancellor Kent’s opinion, on the very point at issue.

“We do therefore impeach Lewis Cass, Governor of the Michigan Territory and Superintendent of Indian Affairs, having a double salary, with many emoluments of office, the continuance of which undoubtedly depends upon the favor of the powers that be;—we do impeach the celebrated Reviewer in the North American, of an act of flagrant and palpable dishonesty as a disputant, in concealing from his readers the true state of the case. Why did he not, like a man, tell his readers, that the decision, on which he had been building, was overruled? Why did he not give at least one page, in connection, from Chancellor Kent’s reasoning;—a page, which would be worth more to mankind, than any fifty, that he himself ever wrote? There is a Latin maxim, which we will translate thus;—and a legal maxim it is, as well as an honest one;—*to conceal the truth, is just as criminal as to tell a downright lie*. The lawyer, who should perform a trick of this kind, by



quoting law as a decision, which he knew to have been set aside by a higher court, would deserve to be thrown over the bar.

"We have charged the reviewer with dishonesty as a disputant. We should not have done this, if it had been a question of politics merely, or of science, or of Indian philology; on which latter subject the reviewer has acquired some little fame, solely because his readers were totally ignorant of the subject, and were therefore unable to detect his ignorance. But the discussion of the rights of the Indians is a graver subject. No course can possibly be so injurious to them as that of concealing the truth, overwhelming their character with obloquy, and disguising the real state of the case by sophistry, while pretending withal to a large share of philanthropy and a great deal of wisdom. There are few moral offences so atrocious, as first to deprive a weak and defenceless people of their public and private character, and then assign their destitution of character as a reason why they should be deprived of their country, their freedom, and, (as the event will prove to many of them) their lives."

There is now and then a stanza in a rejected article which, like Lot in Sodom, makes us fain to save it. Sometimes it is but a line. The author would forgive us the rejection if he could see how we turn it over and over, and ponder on the duller verses, trying to think better of them for its sake. Here is a piece upon 'Ideal Beauty.' It should be, by the hand-writing, the work of a practised writer, and yet, but for one line, we had marked it with an irrevocable bull's eye. He says of his subject:—

"'Tis as the lustre of a beam,  
That wandereth from a star,  
And melts in its own silken stream;—

lines of a fine melody. In some verses called "Sea Musings at Night," the thoughts in one or two instances come near being exceedingly vivid and beautiful. The author is addressing the Sea:—

"When thou'rt in playful mood, all kind and mild,  
Nor with thine enemy, the wind, at war,  
The stars come from their residence afar  
To sport upon thy bosom, as a child  
Upon its mother's, and be hush'd to sleep  
By thy melodious murmurings, wild and deep.

But when the storm is on thee, and thy head  
Is lifted, in its anger, high and hoar—  
Thy trembling as the earthquake, and thy roar  
Fierce as the lion's—then the Heaven, in dread,  
Calls back her stars from thy terrific breast,  
Behind the clouds in their blue fields to rest.

Mysterious Deep! oh could thy voice reveal  
The mighty secrets which are known to thee  
Of this world, and of that whose infancy  
Thou wast ordain'd to strangle!—but the seal  
On thy oblivious lips shall only break  
When the wan prisoners of thy cells awake.

There are glimpses of fine poetry in these verses, and if the author is young, we shall see better things from him, by and by. In the mean time we commend the old English writers to him for study.

A red-letter day has passed since we were last at our table—"Valentine's day." We are simple enough to love this homely festival. There has been so much that is beautiful written about it—it is so steeped as it were in poetry—and withal, it is so linked with the affections of the poor in that land which every reader of Shakspeare among us must feel his own—that we cannot escape its enthusiasm. It is not universally observed as a holiday in our country, and probably in many sections it is hardly known, but in some towns settled partly by English emigrants, it is sacredly kept. We once spent a rustication year in a pretty village on the Housatonic, where the fourteenth of February was a day of the little god's own. There was a general stir through "the street" by the time it was fair sunrise. The Valentine verses were sent always through the Post-office and the flaxen headed underlings of the farms were dropping in from the cross roads and leaping over the walls in all directions, to wait for the first appearance, through the bars, of the tardy, leather-spectacled old Postmaster. Here and there up the street (the road through the village—so called by courtesy) might be seen gliding figures, in blue coats and brass buttons, dodging about behind the trees, to be in sight on the first opening of the shutter---(the first bachelor seen on that day is the maiden's Valentine) and a quick eye would have caught through the green doors, kept slightly a-jar, glimpses of curious faces, watching for the coming by of the right one, or the return of the despatched messenger. Never had brain been so vexed or hand so cramped as ours for a week preceding to furnish disguised Valentines for our favorites. (We wish, with double the toil, now, we could make half so many hearts happy.) Charles Lamb (blessings on his kind nature) has a beautiful essay on Valentine's day. We wish we had room for it all—but here is a part of it:—

"Yet this day was meant for merrier things, perhaps. It is a red-letter day, half-holy; no feast, no fast; but held free of care by a gentle charter, invested with a rich prerogative,—the power of giving pleasure to the young. If the tradition be true, that on this day each bird chooseth his mate, what work hath the carrier pigeon! What rustling of leaves; what chattering and singing in the woods; what billing by the clear waters!—Methinks on this day should Romeo have first seen the gentle Capulet. On this day should Orlando have first glanced at Rosalind; Troilus at the fickle Cressid; Slender, (oh! smile not, gentles,) at Anne Page. The jealous Moor should have told his first war-story to-day; and to day Prospero should have broken his spell, and made holy-day in his enchanted isle, and crowned the time by giving to the son of Naples his innocent and fair Miranda. Fain would I have Valentine's Day the origin of love or the completion, an epoch writ in bright letters in Cupid's calendar, a date whence to reckon our passion, a period to which to refer to our happiness."

"Once," it is said, our "vulgar ancestors" used to draw names on Valentine's eve, and such drawings were considered ominous: as thus—if Jacob Stiles drew the name of Sally Gates, or *vice versa*, Jacob and Sally were henceforward considered "as good as" man and wife.—(Our present lottery, where we are tolerably sure of our blank, is bad enough, but this is the d---l.)—I can well fancy how the country couple would look, flying at first in the face of the augury. Sally mantling and blushing, half proud and half 'shamed, turning to her neighbor Blossom,



and exclaiming, "nonsense!"—Jacob, on the other hand, at something between a grin and a blush, leering on his shouting companions, or expanding a mouth huge enough to swallow every written Valentine in the village. I see him look, (for help,) from clown to clown; upwards and downwards; he whistles, he twirls his smock frock, he stands cross-legged, like the nephew of Mr. Robert Shallow, when the maiden Page invited him house-wards. 'Tis all in vain. The prophecy is upon them; and 'tis odds but the name of Gates will sink and be merged in some three or six months into the cognomen of Jacob."

"I own that I am somewhat of a devotee. I love to keep all festivals, to taste all feast-offerings, from fermenty, (or frumety—*frumentum*,) at Christmas to the pancakes at Shrovetide. These things always seem better on those day: as the bread in the holy days is ever better than the bread at school, though it come from the same oven. Then it must be the same? By no means—to us. Freedom and home plant a different relish upon the tongue, and the viands are transmuted, sublimed.

What is the cross on a Good-Friday's bun,—is that nothing? What is the goose at Michaelmas? What is the regale at a harvest home,—is that nothing? Are the cups, the kissing, the boisterous jollity, the tumbling on the fragrant hay, the dancing, the shouting, the singing out of tune—nothing?

Why then, the world and all that's in't is nothing;  
The covering sky is nothing; Bohemia nothing.

It is WE who make the world. No sky is blue, no leaf is verdant. It is our vision which hath the azure and the green. It is that which expands, or causes to diminish, things which are in themselves ever the same. It is our imagination which lifts earth to heaven; and robes our women in the garb of angels. And is this not better, and wiser, than if we were to measure with the square and the rule, and to fashion our enjoyments by the scanty materials, (the clay,) before us, instead of subliming them to the uttermost stretch of our own immortal capacity?

So it is, that Valentine's Day, which with the Laplander and the Siberian is clad in a cold grey habit, is with us rose-colored and bright. We array it beforehand with hues gayer than the Iris. Our fancies, our hopes, are active. Custom has decided that it shall be a day of love; and though Custom is but too often a tyrant and spurned at, in this case he has always willing subjects. A Valentine—who would not have a Valentine? I ask the question again.

Hark! the postman is sounding at the door. How smart is his knock, how restless his tread upon the pavement. He comes burthened with gay tidings, and he knows it. Door after door is opened before he knocks. The passages are filled with listeners, and the windows thronged with anxious faces. How busy, how expectant are the girls. Observe, the copper is parted from the silver, and ready for immediate payment, or the solitary sixpence is brought forth with a doubt, (between hope and fear,) as to its being required. The carrier of letters is pitied, "because he has *such* a load;" the neighbors are noted,—those who receive Valentines, and particularly *those who have none*. If you look from an upper window, you will see the parlor crowded. You may hear the loud laugh, and see the snatch, the retreat, the struggle to get a sight of the Valentine. In general the address is in a feigned hand; sometimes it is very neat, and written with a crow quill; but oftener the letters are so staring and gaunt, that the serious postman forgets his post and almost smiles. The giver, the receiver, the messenger, are all happy for once. Can a victory by land or by sea do as much? Can a struggle, (though it succeeds,) on a first night's play? a dinner—a dance—a *coronation*? No; some of these are sensual, and all have their drawbacks. It is only on Valentine's Day that enjoyment is pure and unalloyed. Never let us permit the splenetic to rail at it without defence. Above all, never let us allow its pleasant privileges to fall into disuse or decay."

The prettiest girl in the village at that time was the ——'s daughter—a quiet creature, not much a favorite with the beaux of the place, (she was too "bookish," they would say) but one who would, for all that, enter with all her heart into the spirit of such a festival. She was on the watch that morning, and who should come

by, with his hat crowded down as usual over his eyes, but our rustication Tutor—a mere scholar, living in the place for its picturesque retirement, and no more a subject for a Valentine than Dominie Sampson. He was by nature, I believe, a man of the most soaring ambition, and it is known that on leaving college with its first honors, he struck into the world with as fiery a purpose of distinction, though in a different sphere, as ever did the chivalrous Gaston de Foix. A few months of untoward adventure, in which, it was said, among other disappointments, he was rejected by a haughty woman whom he had addressed with the uncalculating impetuosity of a scholar, so chilled and froze his fine feelings, that he gave up the world forever, and came to the quiet place where I found him, with a broken-hearted determination to end his days there. The only being who had interested him was this beautiful girl, who, with a premature taste, loved better than any amusement to listen to his varied conversation. He had fallen after a while into the habit of talking to her like a man in a dream, as an unconscious relief to his feelings, and if I might judge from hearing him now and then by stealth, it was with an eloquence of mingled taste and feeling which comes only from a mind of similar character and circumstances. Well—he heard that he was the Valentine of the fair ——— as soon as my morning lesson was well through. He was at first amused, but presently grew grave, and sat down to his table and wrote the following—Valentine :—

Oh what a bitter mockery  
 This life hath been to me,  
 Since first, to grasp the shining stars,  
 I climb'd my mother's knee.  
 For every hope my childhood nurs'd,  
 And every dream of power,  
 Like plants of Iceland summers,  
 Have frozen in the flower.

Yet were they glorious promises  
 That to my spirit came,  
 With high Ambition's phantom scroll  
 Written in words of flame ;  
 And dreams of worth as high as Heaven,  
 And love as deep as — mine ;  
 But oh how much a tinsel gaud  
 Like golden ore may shine.

In silence and in secret  
 That dream of fame was nurs'd,  
 Till in my brain it bred a fire,  
 And in my heart a thirst.  
 My life was one consuming hope,  
 One burning dream of song—  
 I laugh myself to scorn that I  
 Have been its slave so long.

And love—oh how I lavish'd it  
 On those who could not feel!



Crushing its fresh and beautiful flowers  
To scent a vase of steel;  
Bringing its all of rich and rare,  
Gifts of the lip and lyre,  
To burn upon an altar stone  
That ne'er was touch'd by fire.

And thou!—I would I were a child  
To trust this idle spell—  
But I have learn'd the shadowings  
Of my own lot too well.  
If truth were told by Valentines,  
And burning dreams were fame---  
I had not been unlov'd as now,  
Nor borne so low a name.

It was probably the only Valentine in the village that did not make its receiver happy. I have, by the way, another fragment of poetry by the same hand—(it is cold now, or I would not have unseal'd its traces to the world) which is more characteristic, and expresses, I doubt not, a desire that was like a struggling prayer at his heart:—

When wilt thou come O Azrael! I feel  
As I should break my fetters and go free,  
And with the pathless wanderers of the air  
Utter the spell of motion. I am sick  
For the high home I dream of. I would know  
The depth of the illimitable sky,  
And see the link of systems, and unlock  
The secret of the harmony that made  
The morning stars breathe music. I would meet  
Undazzled, the intolerable ray  
I cannot lift my eye to—follow it  
To the exhaustless fountains of the sun  
Till I had made the mystery of light  
As simple as the lesson of a child.  
I cannot wait corruption. I have dream'd  
Of glorified archangels till I long  
For an illumin'd forehead, and a wing  
That can outfly the morning. I would bathe  
My being in deep knowledge, and drink in  
The element that vibrates with the lyre  
Of Gabriel—I would kneel before the throne,  
And feel that I had comprehended God.  
But oh this dull mortality! This sleep  
Of the great soul in ashes! This confin'd  
Inglorious imprisonment in space  
That perishing birds outpinion! this delay  
In leaping on the limitless career  
Of the eternal elements I know  
Are slumbering in me!—they oppress my thought  
Like a dark vision—and I pine away  
Like a sick eagle fainting in his nest.

\* \* \* \* \*

He died the following summer. The fourteenth of February is still a holiday with me, and a very happy one, but it has never come

round since then, (now six years) and it will never come round while I live, without bringing at least, one hour in which I turn over with melancholy recollections, these and other memorials of my rustication Tutor.

A Prospectus has been issued by a Spanish gentleman, Mr. de Rodriguez, for a volume to be called "Memoirs of Spain." It is intended as a narrative of the late attempt to establish a constitutional government in Spain, embracing a period of three years, from 1820, to 1823. It is to be published in a single volume octavo, by Carter & Hendee. Mr. Rodriguez was personally and actively engaged in his country's struggle for liberty, and we see, by late European publications that his name is among the few, whose proscription, for the prominent part they took in the revolution, is pronounced irreversible in the late amnesty of Ferdinand. No account of this interesting period in the history of Spain has yet been published, and we have no doubt, from our knowledge of the author and his opportunities of information, that his proposed book will be one of the most deeply interesting narratives of the day. We hope every reader will call at the publisher's and add his name to the subscription list now open.

We have upon our table a copy of the London Musical Bijou. It is a showy quarto, with considerable pretensions to taste, and literature—the latter of which is the only one we shall dispute. The music we have not heard played, but two of the lithographic plates, the Parting and the Exiled Knight are very beautiful. The list of writers is an imposing one, including half the popular names of the day—but the book is nevertheless, as precious a collection of *sottises* as ever wasted fair type and paper. The "Maid of Toro," by Sir Walter Scott is bathos itself. Even Mrs. Hemans, whose wing is always so high and steady, flies low in this company. The "Song of Oberon," by the Ettrick Shepherd, is common-place—with but one fresh trace in it, (where the Fay-king tells his troop to "lean to the breeze,") and, for the three pieces of Mrs. Cornwall Barry Wilson, Mrs. Sigourney writes better every week of her poetical life, and so does Mrs. Wells, and Mrs. Brooks, (Norna) and "Hinda," (whoever she is) and Mrs. L. P. Smith, (who wrote better at seventeen) and a host of others who sing (like birds in the woods) unapplauded.

We had a thousand things to say, but our room is exhausted. This number closes our first volume, and we shall enter upon the next with some improvements we could not well effect in this. Our articles will be shorter and more of an amusing cast; and, among other designs, we propose to criticise to the best of our ability, the principal American Poets. And so with thanks for the generous kindness which has met our adventurous experiment, we write to our first year—*finale!*